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ABSTRACT

The Victorian Negotiated Targets Strategy (NTS) was evaluated against the background of comparable practices in other Australian states and territories to evaluate its effectiveness as a means of increasing participation of targeted groups in accredited Technical and Further Education (TAFE) vocational education and training programs in Victoria (Australia). Data were collected from a review of pertinent documents and letters, personal and telephone interviews, and case studies of the implementation and effectiveness of the NTS at the following six Victorian TAFE colleges: Box Hill, East Gippsland, the Gordon, Holmesglen, Outer Eastern, and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Although the quality of data regarding the NTS was determined to be patchy, it was nevertheless concluded that the NTS has operated quite successfully as a cost-effective means of increasing access for disadvantaged clients. The NTS was commended for providing a consistent approach to and raising awareness of equity considerations among TAFE staff in Victoria. Suggestions for improving collection of data regarding NTS outcomes and the possible national application of NTS were discussed. (Contains 27 tables/figures and 108 references. Appended are the following: a list of individuals consulted in the case studies, definitions/characteristics of NTS clients, and supporting data.) (MN)

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Organising a fair go

DAVID LUNDBERG
MITCH CLEARY

Fair participation in vocational education and training and the Victorian Negotiated Targets Strategy

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Adelaide 1995

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Foreword

The aim of this project is to evaluate, against the background of comparable practice in other States and Territories, the Victorian Negotiated Targets Strategy as a practical and cost-effective means of achieving increased participation of targeted groups in accredited TAFE vocational education and training programs.

The 'Negotiated Targets Strategy' (NTS) introduced in Victorian colleges in 1989 became a major part of a strategic approach by the State Training Board to increase the participation by disadvantaged clients in vocational education and training. The strategy sought to ensure that a number of places for students from the main categories of disadvantaged clients were negotiated and identified as NTS places in accredited vocational programs delivered by TAFE colleges.

The NTS involved colleges using their own processes to select students for enrolment in the places they have negotiated and to implement the strategies they have identified as necessary to assist in the achievement of successful student outcomes. Monitoring of college performance related to targets set and achieved for nominated target groups and reporting on implementation of key strategies. In 1993, new NTS guidelines were developed to provide an up-to-date explanation of the strategy. A companion document of NTS best practice was prepared for release to colleges.

A particular focus of this study is the advantages and disadvantages of national application of the principles of the NTS. The Employment and Skill Formation Council's Carmichael report on the Australian Vocational Certificate Training system made reference to the NTS as a 'flexible and effective scheme, which could usefully be adopted more widely to secure access for the disadvantaged to mainstream programs', and recommended national adoption by TAFE systems and publicly-funded providers of vocational education and training and by DEET for State/Territory directors.

This project was proposed to the NCVER Board jointly by Mr Peter Monie and Ms Pam Caven of the Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE), Victoria, and by Dr David Lundberg for NCVER. The project was approved by the June 1993 NCVER Board meeting.

Dr David Lundberg undertook an overview of the development of the NTS policy and practice in Victoria and a review of comparable practice in other States and Territories, using documentary research, letters and personal and telephone interviews. Substantial access to

OTFE data and records was provided. Data in tables attributed to OTFE is reported as provided by OTFE. In considering national application issues, Dr Lundberg has taken into account developments in data standards for Australia's vocational education and training system (AVETMISS).

Ms Mitch Cleary of Precision Consultancy Pty Ltd was engaged as an independent Victorian researcher approved by OTFE to examine all of the Victorian TAFE colleges' NTS Action Plans, and to undertake case studies of the application of the NTS in a cross-section of six TAFE colleges in Victoria. The six colleges selected by the advisory committee were:

- The Gordon (provincial city, industrial, Geelong)
- Outer Eastern (metropolitan, high NESB)
- East Gippsland (rural, Aborigines)
- RMIT (university-TAFE mix)
- Holmesglen (metropolitan)
- Box Hill (original pilot study institution for NTS)

Each case study included: a review of college action plans; documentation about special local activities or initiatives; a brief description of the college environment, including demographic data on catchment area, special relationships with particular industries or occupational groupings, and relevant employment data; interviews with key stakeholders, including teachers and, where possible, students on the operation of the NTS in colleges. Draft case study reports were sent to each college director for verification of the factual accuracy of each report.

Dr David Lundberg and Ms Mitch Cleary acknowledge with appreciation the guidance provided by Mr Peter Monie and Ms Pam Caven of the Office of Training and Further Education as an Advisory Committee. We also thank Ms Elvia Garward of OTFE for her exceptionally valuable assistance, the staff of the TAFE colleges case studied (listed at Attachment 1) for their unstinting co-operation and assistance, Mr Phil Kerr, Ms Elizabeth Maynard and Mr Michael Birch for information about AVETMISS, Dr Josie Misko, Ms Janine Cesnich and Dr Mark Werner for their assistance in obtaining documentation about State and Territory equity policies and practices, Dr Mark Werner for preparing bar charts based on OTFE data, and Ms Pauline Ackland for secretarial support.

Dr Lundberg and Ms Cleary are responsible for evaluation, comment and interpretation in their respective sections of this paper. The conclusions offered are not official policy statements, but the views of the individual authors, based on their analyses.

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Executive summary

This paper evaluates the Victorian Negotiated Targets Strategy (NTS), and the merits of national application of the principles of the strategy, which was recommended by the Employment and Skills Formation Council as part of its proposals for the new Australian Vocational Training System.

The strategy was developed in 1987-1989, with pilot projects in two Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges and applied generally in 1990-1994, with detailed program guidelines. The NTS was intended to promote fair participation in TAFE by disadvantaged clients. Each year, each college proposed to the Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE) of the State Training Board of Victoria (STBV) a set of targets for participation by several categories of disadvantaged clients. Each college also proposed various strategies for assisting disadvantaged clients, broadly intended to assist attainment of one or more of the targets. A small grant was payable by the State Training Board of Victoria to colleges to assist in the implementation of strategies and the attainment of the targets. The NTS budget started at $600 000 in 1990 and increased to $800 000 in 1993 and 1994. NTS places achieved increased from 10 786 in 1990 to 24 320 in 1993, at an appropriate unit cost of $56 in 1990 and $33 in 1993.

The operation of the NTS in Victoria has supported, and been supported by, a number of other equity programs which assist the NTS target groups. The NTS was not seen as a panacea, but as a useful broad strategy which complements various other measures employed to assist participation by the categories of disadvantaged clients encompassed by the NTS. The disadvantaged groups targeted were: Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders; long-term unemployed; people of non-English-speaking background; people with (physical, sensory or intellectual) disabilities; sole supporting parents and women, in relation to courses in which women are under-represented. The NTS targets also included people who have been institutionalised (ex-convicts) until 1992.

The paper discusses data on the operation of the NTS between 1990 and 1993, the general operational principles of the NTS, the colleges' NTS action plans and case studies of the operation of the NTS in six Victorian TAFE colleges.

The overall pattern in data on the NTS scheme throughout Victoria from 1990 to 1993 was for modest success in 1990 and 1991, with a very high increase in places achieved in 1992, followed by a shortfall in total places achieved in relation to targets for all NTS groups in 1993 after stricter guidelines were introduced. This pattern was also evident for women, sole supporting parents, people of non-English-speaking background, and the long-term unemployed. The pattern for people from isolated rural areas, people with disabilities, and Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders was less positive than the other NTS groups.

The six colleges chosen for the case studies were Box Hill , East Gippsland, the Gordon (Geelong), Holmesglen, Outer Eastern and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Collectively, they provide a reasonable cross-section of the Victorian college system. They represent a diversity of approaches to achieving strategies set out in their NTS action plans. Some colleges possibly had better overall strategies whereas others had more

focussed strategies and a history of practice which encouraged participation by local people from one or more particular under-represented group.

The case studies themselves focussed on the action plans, obtaining more detail from colleges about how each particular target was set and what specific strategies were implemented, at what level of the college's operations, to ensure that the target was achieved. Action plans consist of targets set for particular target groups as well as support strategies for the implementation of the NTS. The strategies listed by colleges are often not directly linked to a particular numerical target for one group.

In 1993 the difficulty of defining accurately and consistently membership of the targeted groups was dealt with by a set of guidelines produced by the OTFE but the case studies indicated that practice still varied considerably within and between Victorian colleges. The guidelines also gave definitions of each of the NTS target groups (see Attachment 2).

The shortcomings of the quantitative reporting requirements under the NTS is a recurrent theme of the case studies. Some colleges placed an emphasis on overall participation by NTS groups, while others followed the guidelines more strictly, and focussed on achievement of specifically targeted places. Quantitative measures were seen as being over-valued, to the neglect of qualitative issues. One suggested mechanism for greater qualitative reporting was collection of selected individual case histories. Generally the accuracy of the NTS data collection was questioned, until the handling of definitional issues, like overall and specifically targeted reporting or accounting for persons belonging to several NTS groups, are resolved more clearly.

Initial concerns about the NTS lowering standards were recalled. However, the NTS had won widespread support for the principles of the strategy, despite differences about details. The NTS was considered to have increased awareness about fair participation issues among TAFE staff, and concrete individual and program 'success stories' had won over most opponents of the strategy. Programs for the 'hearing impaired' at Box Hill, women's access at 'the Gordon' in Geelong, electives for girls at Outer Eastern, and the 'Buddy Tutors' and 'Try a trade day' (for girls) at RMIT were cited as successful programs related to the NTS. Removal of the NTS was seen as being likely to lead to a deterioration in equitable access and participation.

Apart from the reporting data, the main criticisms of the NTS in practice at the college level related to: the limitation to full-time enrolments; the difficulty of achieving NTS places in courses that were in high demand; the variety of practices in spending NTS funds; and views for and against linking NTS participation reporting to completions data, and explicitly relating individuals to NTS places.

In 1994, the Victorian Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE) initiated a project on 'managing diversity in the Victorian State training system'. OTFE is establishing an 'integrated system-wide approach' to equity management and accountability, to 'consolidate into the mainstream' existing national and State equity policies, including the NTS. The project is to provide a basis for accountability measures on equity outcomes throughout the State training system, not only in TAFE colleges.

The NTS did not stand alone in Victoria, but complemented a number of other equity policies and programs. The proposal that the principles of the strategy be extended nationally is considered with reference to whether the NTS could 'fit', and add value, in

the policy context in other States and Territories. Vocational education and training in all States and Territories operates within a policy context that is shaped by Commonwealth and State or Territory policies for vocational education and training, including equity policies. The NTS would add specific targeting for most NTS groups in most jurisdictions.

The development of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standards (AVETMISS) as the basis for a new Australian management information system for vocational education and training (NATMISS) is very relevant to the possible national extension of the Victorian Negotiated Targets Strategy. AVETMISS is proposing nationally consistent data standards, population definitions and data collection procedures that could address many of the shortcomings of the NTS data collection. AVETMISS classifications and data specifications cover all of the disadvantaged client categories now covered by the strategy, with one exception: sole supporting parents. The development of reporting arrangements for disadvantaged clients on a nationally consistent basis under AVETMISS will convert a major difficulty into an emerging opportunity.

The Australian National Training Authority has proposed the national application of measures to increase participation by disadvantaged clients in vocational education and training. The paper concludes by suggesting a 'fair participation strategy' based on the principles of the NTS that could be instituted by the ANTA Ministerial Council, consolidating arrangements already initiated by ANTA.

The fair participation strategy would effectively build upon the new AVETMISS/ NATMISS arrangements to apply a somewhat more consistent version of the Victorian Negotiated Targets Strategy to all Australian TAFE institutes and colleges, and eventually to all vocational education and training providers, as the 'managing diversity' project envisages the NTS being extended in Victoria.

1 The Victorian Negotiated Targets Strategy

Introduction

The Negotiated Targets Strategy was established in Victoria as an equity program to promote fair participation in Technical and Further Education (TAFE) by disadvantaged clients. Each year, each college proposed to the Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE) of the State Training Board of Victoria (STBV) a set of targets for participation by several categories of disadvantaged clients. Each college also proposes various strategies for assisting disadvantaged clients, broadly intended to assist attainment of one or more of the targets. A small grant was payable by the State Training Board of Victoria to colleges to assist in the implementation of strategies and the attainment of the targets. Colleges reported each year on the progress each achieved against the agreed targets, and proposed a new set of targets for the next year.

As reported in *The Negotiated Targets Strategy guidelines 1993*, the aims of the Negotiated Targets Strategy (NTS) were:

> *to ensure that a number of places for students from the main categories of under-represented and disadvantaged clients are negotiated and identified as Negotiated Targets Strategy places in accredited vocational programs delivered by TAFE colleges;*
>
> *to ensure that college selection processes have sufficient flexibility for under-represented and disadvantaged clients from identified Negotiated Targets Strategy target groups to be selected and enrolled in NTS places negotiated in accredited vocational programs;*
>
> *to document in College Performance Agreements and Negotiated Targets Strategy Action Plans a range of strategies for the provision of support and other services necessary to achieve successful outcomes for NTS students;*
>
> *to progressively increase the participation rates of under-represented and disadvantaged groups in accredited vocational training programs delivered by TAFE colleges (OTFE, 1993).*

The strategy was developed in 1987–1989, and applied generally in 1990–1994. The NTS is inherently interesting as an important equity

initiative in Victorian TAFE, but it has attracted national interest. The NTS has been promoted as a key strategy for increasing women's participation in TAFE by the National Plan of Action for Women in TAFE.

Furthermore, to ensure fair representation for disadvantaged groups in the new Australian Vocational Training System (AVTS) that is being phased in from January 1995 to January 1997, in March 1992 the Employment and Skills Formation Council recommended that the NTS be applied nationally by all TAFE systems. This extension of the strategy would underpin more targeted equity programs for women, non-English-speaking and Aborigine and Torres Strait Islander people which were also recommended. The recommendation related to applying the NTS to TAFE and publicly-funded providers of vocational education and training in the Carmichael report was that:

> *TAFE and publicly-funded providers of vocational education and training should be required to negotiate reasonable targets for participation in their . . . programs by the main categories of disadvantaged groups represented in their geographic areas and to demonstrate that these targets have been met in annual reporting.*

The Employment and Skills Formation Council also recommended that a similar policy approach be applied by the Department of Employment, Education and Training to the State directors.

Various aspects of the Australian Vocational Training System (not including the negotiated targets strategy) have been and are being tested in AVTS pilot projects throughout Australia. The results of initial meta-evaluation reports informed Commonwealth, State and Territory ANTA Ministerial Council decisions in November 1994 to proceed with full implementation between January 1995 and January 1997.

The National Centre for Vocational Education Research has undertaken a study of the negotiated targets strategy, with a view to evaluating the scope for national application of the strategy in the manner proposed by the Employment and Skills Formation Council in the report on the Australian Vocational Training System.

In 1995 Victoria's NTS is being 'mainstreamed', so that it will no longer be a distinctive program in Victoria, but be integrated with Victorian vocational education and training programs.

Evolution of the Negotiated Targets Strategy

The Negotiated Targets Strategy evolved from an initiative at the Box Hill College of TAFE in 1987. The Box Hill initiative, called the 'negotiated quota system', was developed and tested in 1987 and 1988 at the college to improve social justice in participation in TAFE courses.

Under the negotiated quota system at Box Hill, places were targeted in courses where disadvantaged groups were under-represented. The disadvantaged groups were: Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders; long-term unemployed; people of non-English-speaking background; people with (physical, sensory or intellectual) disabilities; people who have been institutionalised (ex-convicts); sole supporting parents and women, in relation to courses in which women are under-represented.

The pilot at Box Hill was so successful that a network of equal opportunity officers in Victorian TAFE recommended that a negotiated quota system be introduced throughout Victoria, initially in TAFE and then in other training bodies related to the Office of the State Training Board. This was seen as being consistent with the 1987 social justice strategy of the Victorian government, and with federal and State legislation dealing with equal opportunity and affirmative action.

It was recommended that a 'negotiated quota system' be instituted by the State Training Board in 1988/89 through the process of budget negotiations with TAFE colleges. The 'negotiated targets policy' was approved by the State Training Board to promote social justice, not to be 'kind' to the target groups, but *as an integral part of our strategies to develop a trained workforce* (Sdrinis, 1990, p 8). The initiating policy statement used the term 'negotiated target policy' instead of 'negotiated quota system'. Colleges would have the option of phased-in application to specific groups and courses or comprehensive application to all groups in all courses at a college. Colleges would be expected to provide (and if necessary upgrade) support services for disadvantaged clients, and not merely to provide places which set people up to fail in the absence of necessary support services. The general manager of the Office of the State Training Board, Mr Moran, in a memorandum to all college directors, said:

> *Certainly, the Office of the State Training Board does not present the Negotiated Targets Policy as the sole mechanism through which we will bring about greater equity of educational participation. It is acknowledged that providing access to courses is only the beginning. The Office of the State Training Board is committed to ensuring that, once access is gained, students are given every support to succeed.* (STBV 1988)

The November 1988 policy statement was an *Implementation manual* which defined the policy, outlined the role of college managers in its co-ordination, publicity and data base requirements, procedures for negotiating targets and monitoring arrangements. The November 1988 policy statement defined the aim of the negotiated targets policy as:

> *to progressively increase the participation rates of under-represented groups in all courses, and in particular mainstream vocational*

training, to a level which reflects this proportionate representation in the community (STBV 1988, p. 4).

The negotiation process was seen as a key characteristic of the negotiated targets policy. There would be no generally applicable arbitrary bureaucratic quota. Rather college staff would participate in setting targets that varied by course and client groups so that they were 'realistic and achievable' for each college. Industry Training Boards would also be expected to achieve equal opportunity goals negotiated within their performance agreement, when the negotiated target policy was extended to them.

The November 1988 policy statement included six of the groups encompassed by the Box Hill 'negotiated quota system'. From 1990, people from isolated rural areas were added as a NTS target group and from 1992 people who were or had been 'institutionalised' (jailed) were removed (STBV 1988, p. 4). The definitions of the target groups included within the negotiated targets policy are provided at Attachment 2.

The negotiated targets were included in the State Training Board performance plan and college performance agreements, and supported by achievement objectives in the performance improvement plans of TAFE managers. The college director as head of a small management team was to take responsibility for the implementation of the policy. Colleges were to set negotiated targets that included numbers of students by designated target group and courses over specified periods. The targets should be based on data about disadvantaged groups in the college's catchment area, and community consultation. Equal opportunity officers and support services were to be included in setting targets and developing support strategies. Colleges were alerted to consider the need to modify curriculum and selection policies and priorities, and to develop effective monitoring mechanisms. The policy was to be advertised in leaflets, college handbooks and similar material.

In 1988, seven negotiated targets policy objectives were written into all 1989 Victorian TAFE college performance agreements with the State Training Board, to plan the basis for implementing the policy over the following five years. Table 1-1 shows how a 1989 mid-year review by the State Training Board found each college had co-operated with this planning for implementation of the negotiated targets policy. (See Attachment 3)

To co-ordinate implementation of the negotiated targets policy, 26 colleges established NTP working groups, with representation from the Office of the State Training Board on 19. Under-represented client groups were identified by 29 colleges with 16 colleges identifying women's issues, 13 colleges identifying people with disabilities, 12 targeting Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, eight identifying sole supporting parents, seven colleges identifying rural women and the

long-term unemployed and six colleges targeting recently institutionalised people. Only Northern Metropolitan and Box Hill colleges established negotiated targets for mainstream vocational courses but 31 colleges reported that they had set targets for new initiatives in 1989 and that they were working to the September 1989 deadline to set NTP targets for 1990. Reviewing processes were established to monitor NTP participation and completion rates in 21 colleges, but relevant data was not collected at all in a number of colleges. The negotiated targets policy was a staff development priority in 16 colleges and it had been incorporated in performance improvement plans for TAFE managers in 27 colleges.

In 1989 the State Training Board of Victoria awarded both the Box Hill College of TAFE and the Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE a grant of $75 000 each to pilot the STBV's negotiated targets policy. The two 1989 pilots were intended to develop mechanisms for extending the negotiated targets approach throughout Victoria in 1990. Box Hill TAFE managed all of the policy objectives dealt with in the 1989 STB mid-year review. Box Hill also developed 'strategies' or procedures relevant to implementing a negotiated targets policy. The college identified priority client groups, the factors which affect their participation in, or completion of, TAFE courses, and the support services they required. The college consulted widely to identify the skill needs of client groups and prepared a training plan to meet those needs. The college provided appropriate counselling and support services for the identified priority client groups. Project co-ordinators, staff development, publicity and evaluation were all addressed systematically. Table 1-2 shows the main results of the Box Hill pilot. (See Attachment 3). In 1988, the achievement of 843 places against a target of 983 was a success rate of 85.8 per cent, which increased to the achievement of 1414 places against targets of 1314, a success rate of 107.6 per cent, in a college of 16 155 students (Box Hill 1989).

Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE is a large college created by combining Preston and Collingwood colleges in 1989, with over 20 000 students, about 95 per cent of whom were part-time. Preston campus had planned in 1988 to introduce the negotiated targets policy to all full-time accredited courses in 1989 (which represented no more than 5 per cent of students). The Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE proceeded to implement this approach in 1989, using the State Training Board's 1988 *Implementation manual* for guidelines.

Avoiding the bureaucratic terminology of 'negotiated targets policy', Northern Metropolitan College advertised the program as a 'special entry provision scheme', which is more meaningful from a client perspective. The pilot led a considerable improvement in co-ordinated support services for students and there was a perception of positive co-operation and increased awareness of equity issues on the part of staff. The pilot project led to the team to conclude that selection procedures needed to be non-threatening and to identify the support needs of disadvantaged clients, without becoming too

intrusive. Support staff and student's English proficiency were identified as two key factors in the success of students in their courses. Northern Metropolitan also suggested that success of the negotiated targets policy should be determined by students who wanted to enter the workforce gaining employment, not merely access to, and completion of, TAFE courses. They recommended accordingly (Fletcher et al 1990). Finding employment involves so many variables beyond the control of educational bodies that this suggestion is of doubtful practical value. Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE appears to have been less successful than Box Hill College of TAFE in achieving NTP places against NTP targets.

In 1990 the STBV's negotiated targets policy (NTP) became the negotiated targets strategy (NTS). The negotiated targets strategy was applied generally to Victorian TAFE colleges, with a budget of $600 000. This program continued through 1994, with progressive modifications of detail, and an annual budget increasing to over $800 000.

Following the allocation of $150 000 to Box Hill and Northern Metropolitan TAFE colleges in 1989 for pilot projects, in 1990 each director of Victoria's TAFE colleges was directed to implement the Negotiated Targets Strategy (NTS) in his or her college as part of the college's annual performance agreement with the Office of the State Training Board. Colleges were required to specify 1990 participation targets for NTS client groups, develop strategies to provide necessary support for NTS participants, and to incorporate the targets and strategies within the college's action plan for 1990.

The State Training Board allocated $600 000 to Victorian TAFE colleges to support the provision of services to sustain the participation in 'mainstream' accredited TAFE courses by students from NTS target groups. These support services included support for people with disabilities (36.7%), counselling (22.2%), assistance for Aborigines (12.7%), bridging and preparatory courses (11.1%) and other (11.8%) support activities (such as a 'women in trades' facilitator). The budgets indicate that most of these support provisions were for salaries for supporting staff. Provision was also made for broad systemic infrastructure for the NTS program, including publicity, database and staff development (5.6%).

Each director was advised that the college's 1990 performance agreement identified the support strategies that were being funded, and the related targets, and that *your college's performance will be measured against the agreed targets in June and December 1990* (Memorandum from Acting General Manager, 12 January 1990, in Anderson and Luxton, Attachment 2).

The negotiated targets strategy was also underpinned by legislation in the following parts of the *Victorian Vocational Education and Training Act 1990*:

Part 1 OBJECTS s.4

4(i) To ensure adequate access to vocational education and training and to the services and programs of TAFE colleges and TAFE institutions in general by disadvantaged persons and groups and to make provision for the equitable treatment of all individuals in the provision of services and programs by TAFE colleges and TAFE institutions.

Part 2 FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD s.9

1(a) (iv) Increasing the participation of disadvantaged groups in vocational education and training.

Part 3 TAFE COLLEGES s.25

1(c) To make adequate arrangements for persons and groups which have not had or do not have adequate access to technical and further education programs and services.

The bureaucratic directives were, therefore, fully supported by legislation.

Other Victorian equity strategies

The State Training Board literature on the Negotiated Targets Strategy (NTS), the six case studies in section two of this paper, and the other Victorian equity strategies summarised in Table 1-3 from *the training profile for Victoria, 1994* all emphasise the importance of other complementary equity strategies to support successful participation by disadvantaged clients for whom the NTS secures access to TAFE programs. The NTS was not seen as a panacea, but as a useful broad strategy which complemented various other measures employed to assist participation by the categories of disadvantaged clients encompassed by the negotiated targets strategy.

The coverage of disadvantaged clients in Table 1-3 (see Attachment 3) includes the 'institutionalised' (in jails and other custodial arrangements) category that was included in the negotiated targets strategy until 1992. Table 1-3 does not describe the range of detailed programs operational within Victorian TAFE colleges, but describes the general nature of supportive provisions.

In 1994, TAFE applicants were included in the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre (VTAC) process for the first time. Students who were eligible for consideration under an NTS category were invited to identify themselves on their application so that it would be given special consideration for an NTS place. The implications of the

change to VTAC processing are discussed in several of the case study reports in the next section of this paper. The processing of TAFE admissions by VTAC will be evaluated in 1995.

The 1993 *Annual Report* of the State Training Board of Victoria describes some of the major Victorian equity programs which support, and are supported by, the negotiated targets strategy. These programs include equal opportunity employment initiatives for TAFE staff, which are important both for fair employment practices and for the role models which TAFE staff from NTS groups can provide to students from NTS groups. Women were the primary focus of the equal employment opportunity action plan in 1992-93, but preparatory action on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff was also initiated.

For women students, Victoria actively participates in the National Plan of Action for Women in TAFE (NPAWT) which was initiated by Commonwealth, State and Territory governments in 1991. The State Training Board of Victoria adopted a three-year State Training System Strategy for Women in March 1992 to implement NPAWT objectives in Victoria. NPAWT involved prioritised action plans to improve access to accredited TAFE courses, participation in vocational education and training, gender inclusive curricula and teaching in the learning environment, child-care and other support services in the physical environment, and opportunities for women in further training, employment and decision making. Victoria has also contributed substantially to several national NPAWT projects.

For people of non-English-speaking background (NESB), the State Training Board of Victoria co-ordinates provision by TAFE, industry training boards, community and private providers of language and literacy programs that are funded by the Commonwealth, Victoria and private employers. These courses include workplace English speaking and literacy, and vocational and advanced English as a second language courses for NESB people.

For Victorian Aborigines, the State Training Board has developed special programs for Koories (a name for some southern Aborigines) with Koorie liaison officers for support of Aboriginal students in half of Victoria's TAFE colleges. The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated operates like an industry training board to prepare an annual Koori Training Plan for the Victorian vocational education and training system.

For people with disabilities, the State Training Board of Victoria developed a Strategic Plan for People with Disabilities in 1993. It also endorsed and distributed to Victorian TAFE colleges 'best practice' guidelines for TAFE staff dealing with people with disabilities that were developed by Western Metropolitan College of TAFE. Half of Victoria's TAFE colleges employ disability liaison officers to support people with disabilities who are, or are seeking to become, TAFE

students. About two-thirds of Victoria's TAFE colleges deliver Certificate in Work Education courses for students with special learning needs. Victoria also provides special services for people with disabilities, such as the Centre of Excellence for the Deaf/Hearing Impaired at Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE.

Although the 'institutional' category in the NTS was dropped in 1992, the State Training Board and eight TAFE colleges provide vocational education and training for people under the control of Victoria's Correctional Services Division. The importance of continuing developmental pathways is a priority consideration in this co-operation.

Even this brief overview of other Victorian equity programs establishes the point that the NTS was always intended to be complementary to other programs.

Operation of the Negotiated Targets Strategy

In 1990, twenty nine Victorian TAFE colleges reported on both NTS targets set (Table 1-4) and NTS places achieved (Table 1-5; see Attachment 3). Despite the strong bureaucratic and legislative imperatives to comply with the negotiated targets strategy, three colleges did not report on NTS places achieved in 1990. It is appropriate to note that mono-purpose colleges in Victoria primarily service apprentices who are selected by their employers, rather than TAFE colleges. In these circumstances, the NTS is less applicable to them.

Among those who did comply, Office of the State Training Board staff noted that some reported on total projected enrolment for NTS groups, not on the places specifically allocated to disadvantaged clients under the Negotiated Targets Strategy. The breadth of course coverage varied. 'Places achieved' data recorded enrolments, not completions, and distinctions between part-time and full-time or new and continuing students were not made consistently. There may have been incorrect recording of the same student against more than one category for which he or she was eligible in some cases (Anderson and Luxton, 1990). Given these rather severe data limitations, assessments of the efficacy of the strategy must be heavily qualified.

Nevertheless, the data reported in Tables 1-4 and 1-5 indicate that places achieved for the two largest categories, women and people of non-English-speaking background, substantially exceeded their targets set. Places achieved also exceeded targets set for the long-term unemployed and sole-supporting parents. However, places achieved fell short of targets set for the third largest group, people from isolated rural areas, people with disabilities, and by about one quarter

in the case of the two groups for whom the targets aspired least: Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, and people who had been 'institutionalised' (in jails).

In 1991, the State Training Board again allocated $600 000 to support implementation of the NTS for college-specific projects, college-based activities with state-wide implications, and central Office of the State Training Board co-ordination. Fifteen college-based projects were funded, to fund integration officers for women, people with non-English-speaking backgrounds, people with disabilities, Aboriginal liaison, student counselling, student support services, one for NTS awareness/marketing and one for an NTS social justice data base. OSTB projects consumed about $280 900 of the $600 000 budget, including NTS awareness among TAFE staff, funding staff from three colleges to develop a college-based NTS implementation strategy and consultancy advice to colleges, and an evaluation of the NTS (Anderson and Luxton, 1991).

In 1991, twenty nine Victorian TAFE colleges reported on both NTS targets set (Table 1-6) and NTS places achieved (Table 1-7; see Attachment 3). Four colleges did not comply with NTS reporting requirements in 1991. The data reported in Tables 1-6 and 1-7 indicate that places achieved substantially exceeded targets set, except for the two least popular categories in terms of target setting. In the 'institutional' category, the target of 32 fell one short, but the 1991 target was half the size of places achieved and about one third of the target set in 1990, and for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, the 1990 places achieved were again only three quarters of the rather small target set, which had not changed from 1990. However, the most dramatic change was in the targets set for the third largest group in 1990, people from isolated rural areas, who became the third smallest group in 1991, with a 1991 target only one fifth of the places achieved in 1990. On the other hand, the NTS responded to the declining business cycle in 1991, by increasing targets set for the long-term unemployed from 590 in 1990 to 1422 in 1991, and the places achieved for the long-term unemployed from 639 in 1990 to 2026 in 1991.

Overall, the 1991 outcome of the negotiated targets strategy was only slightly better than 1990 in terms of places achieved, and the ratio of places achieved to targets set was a little better in 1990 than in 1991.

In March 1992, Mr Moran, then General Manager of the OSTB sought to have access for the long-term unemployed to NTS places improved still further, by appropriate measures, such as granting them 'first refusal' of places for which they were qualified. This was constrained by target setting lead times and the need to budget appropriate support (OSTB memos). This relative inflexibility (within a given annual cycle) in relation to central priority setting only highlights the responsiveness of the local priority setting in 1991 to the emerging needs of the unemployed. Furthermore, while the 1992 process was

too far advanced to be affected by Mr Moran's proposal, the response from the colleges to the cyclically increased needs of the long-term unemployed was substantial.

The evident resistance within the system to a substantially increased and sustained effort on behalf of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders in 1990 and 1991 is a less attractive consequence of the same decentralised initiative arrangements, but even for this category of disadvantaged clients, 1992 brought signs of improvement.

The 1992 budget of $600 000 was not increased in nominal dollars over 1991 and 1990, which necessarily involved a reduction in real purchasing power corresponding to the inflation rate over 1990-1992. However, the substantial OSTB share of the 1991 allocation was reduced by about $100 000 in 1992, a difference that substantially exceeded the effects of inflation as far as funding of college-specific projects were concerned. This shift in priorities was also consistent with a diminishing need for centrally co-ordinated NTS marketing and awareness activities as TAFE staff became more familiar with the purpose and operation of the NTS.

A new budget model developed by the Equity Policy and Programs Branch of the Office of the State Training Board (OSTB) for the NTS was applied in 1992. This new model involved the allocation of the 1992 budget of $600 000 after ranking Victorian TAFE colleges on a scale of 1-5 in terms of six criteria:

- the quarterly average level of unemployment in Commonwealth Employment Service regions within the college's geographic catchment;
- the range of NTS client groups targeted by the college;
- the proportion of places targeted in accredited vocational programs;
- the existing level of student services at the college (reviewed by OSTB in 1990);
- the range of college initiatives to support NTS implementation in 1991 college NTS Action Plans;
- the college's percentage achievement rate of 1991 targets.

This model was intended to reduce reliance upon assessment of annual submissions, to integrate the allocation of NTS funds within college and OSTB planning, and to allocate NTS resources fairly between colleges, in a way that created incentives for improved performance. Colleges would be allocated to one of six funding bands on the basis of their aggregate score derived from rankings under the six criteria, with an annual review at the beginning of each budgetary cycle. The funding scale related to the notional scores under the six bands as follows:

- Band 1 (20-30): $30 000
- Band 2 (18-19): $25 000
- Band 3 (14-17): $20 000

- Band 4 (11-13): $15 000
- Band 5 (9-10): $10 000
- Band 6 (0-8): nil

On this basis, Box Hill, Broadmeadows, Frankston, Western Metropolitan and William Angliss colleges were in Band 1, while Batman, Richmond and Melbourne College of Printing and Graphic Arts were allocated to Band 6 (OSTB memo).

Of the six colleges case studied in 1993 for the next section of this paper, in 1992 it has been mentioned that Box Hill was in Band 1, and of the others East Gippsland was in Band 2, the Gordon, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, and Outer Eastern were in Band 3, and Holmesglen was in Band 4.

The level of funding per college embodied in the NTS budgets for 1990-1992 were obviously not a substantial financial incentive, so compliance still depended on agreement with the basic equity goals of the NTS, and/or recognition of the value attached to it within the State Training Board and the Parliament.

In 1992, it has already been mentioned that the 'institutional' category of clients was removed from the strategy. This seems to be unfortunate in equity terms, but the category was not among the most successful aspects of the operation of the NTS.

In 1992, thirty Victorian TAFE colleges reported on both NTS targets set (Table 1-8) and NTS places achieved (Table 1-9), a slight improvement in compliance over 1990 and 1991 (see Attachment 3). The data reported in Tables 1-8 and 1-9 indicate that the 44 035 places achieved greatly exceeded the 26 643 targets set, without exceptions in any of the disadvantaged client categories. The substantially larger targets for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders were exceeded, with places achieved in 1992 more than three times greater than the 1990/1991 targets. Major increases apparently occurred in places achieved for the long term unemployed, people of non-English-speaking background, people from isolated rural areas, women and sole supporting parents. Some improvement occurred in places for people with disabilities.

However, there is a view that 1992 figures were distorted by more general use of the practice of reporting people within a given NTS category who enrolled within an appropriate course, not necessarily additionally as a result of NTS targeting and places specifically being made available. This view inspired the development of more closely defined guidelines for *Negotiated targets strategy: Guidelines 1993*, which the Office of Training and Further Education implemented in 1993. In December 1992 the Office of the State Training Board was re-named the Office of Training and Further Education. Related organisational changes included a gradual reduction of the size of the State Training Board.

The new guidelines provided clearer definitions of the NTS target groups (see Attachment 2 of this paper) and defined NTS students, targeted places and targets achieved, and outlined the operational requirements of the NTS program in more rigorous terms than had previously been provided to colleges (OTFE, May 1993).

The Office of Training and Further Education also fed back to colleges in 1993 a compilation of NTS strategies from 1992 college NTS Action Plans, entitled *Negotiated targets strategies in Victorian TAFE colleges*. While not a best practice analysis, it did provide inspiration and guidance, and a degree of prodding of the less imaginative and minimally active, by indicating the diversity and creativity evident in the Victorian TAFE system overall.

In 1993 and 1994, the annual budget for the strategy increased from $600 000 to $800 000.

In 1993, the six criteria embodied in the 1992 NTS budget formula were simplified to three, on the advice of an NTS Reference Group (with college representation) that was formed in August 1992. The NTS Reference Group considered an options paper for NTS funding prepared within the OTFE. The three criteria agreed upon for 1993 were:

- college size (indicated by full-time equivalent student contact hours)
- the range of NTS client groups targeted by the college
- the college's percentage achievement rate of NTS targets, indicated in mid-year monitoring reports provided by the college

It was decided that in 1993 all Victorian TAFE colleges would receive NTS funding, thereby requiring them to account for its expenditure, with the provision to each college ranging from $10 000 to $35 000, in a set of eight funding groups similar to the six 1992 bands (without the nil funding group). This was still a negligible level of per college funding, so that the NTS was still obviously not a scheme that relied heavily on material incentives.

Of the six colleges case studied in 1993 for the next section of this paper, in 1993 Box Hill received $35 000, the Gordon, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Outer Eastern and Holmesglen received $30 000, and East Gippsland received $28 000, a relative decline for East Gippsland and an improvement for Holmesglen.

In 1993, thirty-one Victorian TAFE colleges reported on both NTS targets set (Table 1-10) and NTS places achieved (Table 1-11), a further slight improvement in compliance over the three previous years (see Attachment 3). The data reported in Tables 1-10 and 1-11 indicate that there was a shortfall in NTS outcomes in 1993, with 24 320 overall places achieved in relation to the 29 040 NTS target places set in 1993. This pattern of a shortfall in places attained relative to targets set was consistent across all of the NTS groups, except

women, where there were 7 793 places targeted and 8 343 places attained, but even this outcome represented a decline from the 9 139 places for women attained in 1992.

This apparent decline in the overall outcomes reported in 1993 may reflect the impact of more precise guidelines, supporting the view that the rather dramatic improvements in 1992 may have been somewhat inflated by inconsistencies in reporting practice that the guidelines were developed to minimise.

In 1994, thirty-one Victorian TAFE colleges reported NTS targets set (Table 1-12). Overall funding for 1994 was again set at $800 000, with provision to each college ranging from $11 000 to $44 000.At the time of writing, data on 1994 NTS places achieved was not yet available. The data reported in Table 1-12 indicate that NTS targets set for 1994 at 33 481 were a modest increase on the 29 040 NTS places targeted in 1993 (see Attachment 3).

In 1994, the Quality and Change Management Division of the Victorian Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE) initiated a project on 'managing diversity in the Victorian State training system', which is establishing an 'integrated system-wide approach' to equity management and accountability. The avowed intention of the project is to 'consolidate into the mainstream' existing national and State equity policies, including the NTS. The project is to provide a basis for accountability measures which would sustain periodic reporting to the State Training Board of Victoria by the director of the Office of Training and Further Education on equity outcomes throughout the State training system, not only in TAFE colleges. This includes definition of processes for all training providers who have public funding under programs with equity objectives to report on equity targets set, access achieved and completion outcomes, with targets and indicators to monitor outcomes for disadvantaged groups. This, it is suggested, will integrate equity considerations into the main stream of OTFE operations. The strategy would be absorbed within what purports to be a more comprehensive, integrated, 'mainstream' approach to equity.

Much depends on how the outcomes of the project on 'managing diversity in the Victorian State training system' are formulated and implemented. There are a spectrum of possibilities. Towards the negative end of the spectrum, the specific focus of the NTS on targets set and achieved for specific categories of disadvantaged clients may be lost, and replaced by a vague 'mainstream', non-specific reference to improving equity without explicit targets and measures. That would be contrary to the express purpose of the project, but consistent with the practical effect of many other situations in which "main streaming" has provided a smokescreen for the dismantling of uncomfortably specific equity measures.

Towards the positive end of the spectrum of possibilities, and more consistent with the overt purpose of the 'managing diversity' project,

the NTS could be subsumed into a more comprehensive approach. The new approach may encompass non-TAFE providers, as the was originally intended to do, once experience in TAFE was accumulated. It may address completions as well as targets set and access achieved, which has been sought for some time as an improvement in the negotiated targets system that until now has been prevented by limitations in college reporting systems. The new system could address both the overall level of participation by disadvantaged clients in each NTS category, and the additional places provided in response to equity targets set, on a consistent and comparable basis. This would also be an improvement upon previous practice under the negotiated targets strategy. The concrete outcomes of the 'managing diversity' project are therefore very important.

Before discussing the six college case studies that were undertaken as a part of this project, it is appropriate to 'set the scene' by assessing the operation of the NTS in Victorian TAFE colleges from a state-wide perspective, taking into consideration and summarising the trends evident in the data available to the Office of Training and Further Education, to which access was provided to the National Centre for Vocational Education Research which are reported in Tables 1-4 to 1-12.

The first of the eight following bar charts, figure 1-13, graphically depicts the trends for all NTS target groups. The overall pattern is of modest success in 1990 and 1991, in terms of higher attainments of places achieved than targets set, and a substantial level of overall achievement for all NTS groups, in terms of places attained. The very high rate of places achieved against targets for all NTS groups in 1992 is also clear. The substantial sobering effect of the guidelines that were introduced for 1993 led to places achieved for all NTS groups falling short of targets for the first time. The change in the State government from Labour to Liberal might have been a contextual influence.

The other seven bar charts, figures 1-14 to 1-20, represent the patterns for each of the NTS target groups separately. The same pattern as that depicted in figure 1-13 is generally observable in figure 1-14 for women, figure 1-15 for sole supporting parents, figure 1-16 for people of non-English-speaking background and figure 1-17 for long-term unemployed people. The pattern for people from isolated rural areas in figure 1-18 differs in 1990, when places achieved fell slightly short of the targets, and in the substantial reduction in both targets set and places attained in 1991. Figure 1-19 for people with disabilities only varied from the general pattern in 1990 when places attained fell slightly short of the targets set. On the other hand, figure 1-20 for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders only conformed to the general pattern in 1992 and 1993, falling short of the targets set in 1990 and 1991, and falling short by a larger margin than all NTS groups in 1993.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander group that is usually the most disadvantaged in the Australian community seems to have benefited least from the operation of the negotiated targets system, if the measure is the relationship between places attained and targets set. On the other hand, in terms of places attained, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities gained about one per cent of places achieved in 1990 and 1993. While this fell short of targets, it was a worthwhile improvement in itself. Moreover, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander applicants and people with disabilities have benefitted substantially from other equity programs which complement the strategy. Support for people with disabilities has been an important aspect of the concrete action plans adopted by a number of colleges under the NTS.

In 1993 the allocation of funds increased for the first time from $600 000 to $800 000, after being at the same nominal dollar value for three years. There was some variation in the mix of central and college funds, but the cost of funding per NTS place achieved has been very little: approximately $56 per place in 1990 and $33 per place in 1993, calculated on the basis of dividing the total NTS budget by the total number of NTS places achieved in the year. Needless to say, that figure only reflects the cost of NTS allocation of places, the capital and recurrent costs of providing the places in question are met through mainstream budget processes.

In 1993 the difficulty of defining accurately and consistently membership of the targeted groups was dealt with by a set of guidelines produced by the OTFE. The precise definition of NTS participants was very vague and somewhat inconsistent, at least until the 1993 guidelines were introduced. Perhaps partly for that reason, the allocation of NTS funding has never been directly linked to the number of NTS target places set, and the budgetary formula introduced in 1992 is linked to an index of overall performance. This is realistic, because the funds allocated do not in themselves constitute a significant incentive.

While the link between funding and places is indirect, the linkage between targets and the particular strategies used by different colleges to increase participation by disadvantaged groups is also somewhat tenuous. The OTFE's 1993 strategies publication was useful, but NTS strategies have not been examined systematically to determine their effectiveness, as a basis for a code of best practice that would optimise the application of the distilled experience.

The pros and cons of central or local determination of targets are somewhat mixed. There is no weighting of priority within the NTS to any of the targeted groups. In 1992, the then general manager of OSTB asked for consideration of the idea of higher priority being accorded to the long-term unemployed in a cyclical downturn. The problems of doing so after an annual cycle of target setting had been completed were daunting, showing the relative inflexibility of centrally directed changes in priorities. However, many of the

Figure 1-13: NTS targets set and places achieved, 1990-1993, for all NTS groups

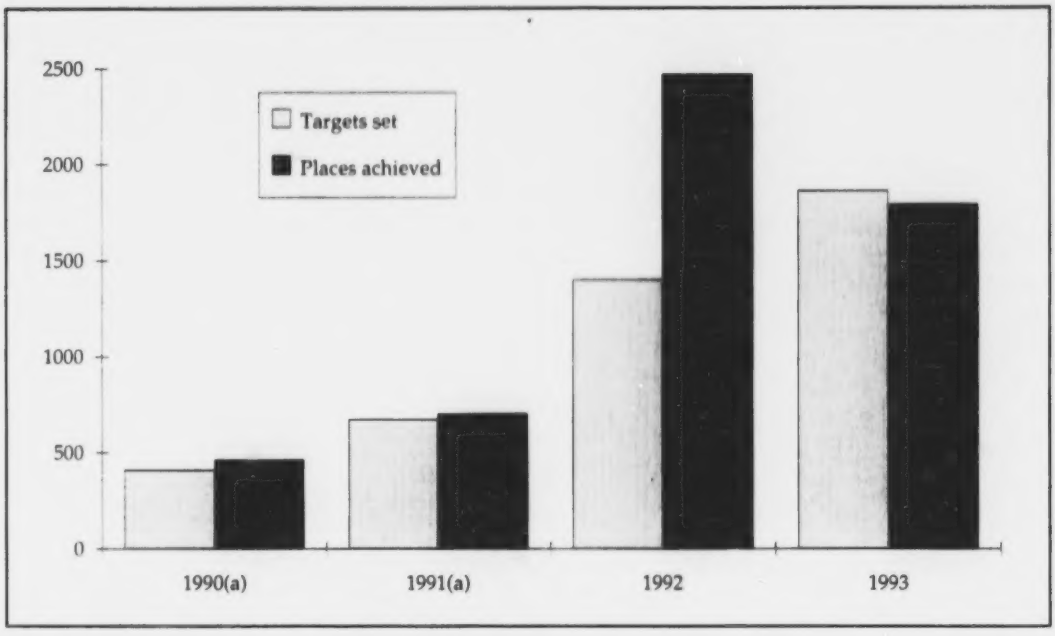
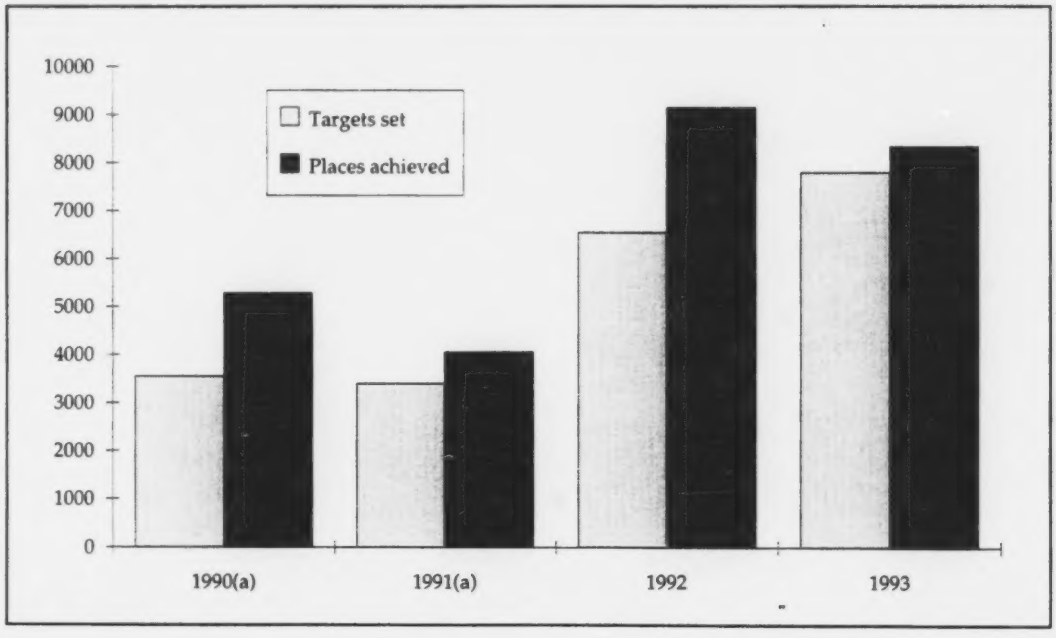


Figure 1-14: NTS targets set and places achieved, 1990-1993, for women



Data Source: OTFE

Figure 1-15: NTS targets set and places achieved, 1990-1993, for sole supporting parents

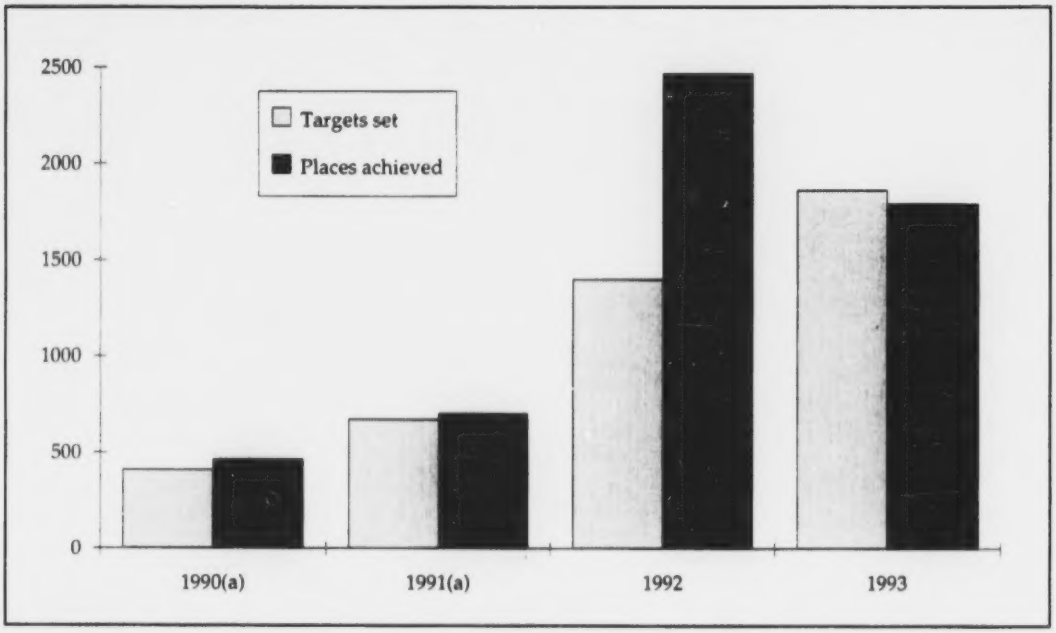
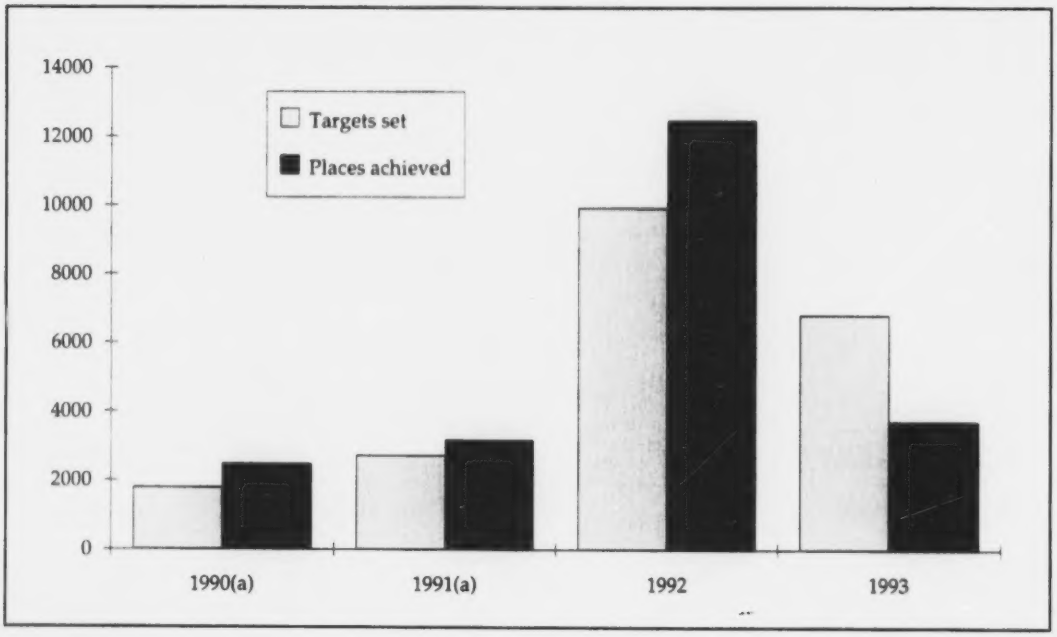


Figure 1-16: NTS targets set and places achieved, 1990-1993, for people of non-English-speaking backgrounds



Data Source: OTFE

Figure 1-17: NTS targets set and places achieved, 1990-1993, for long term unemployed people

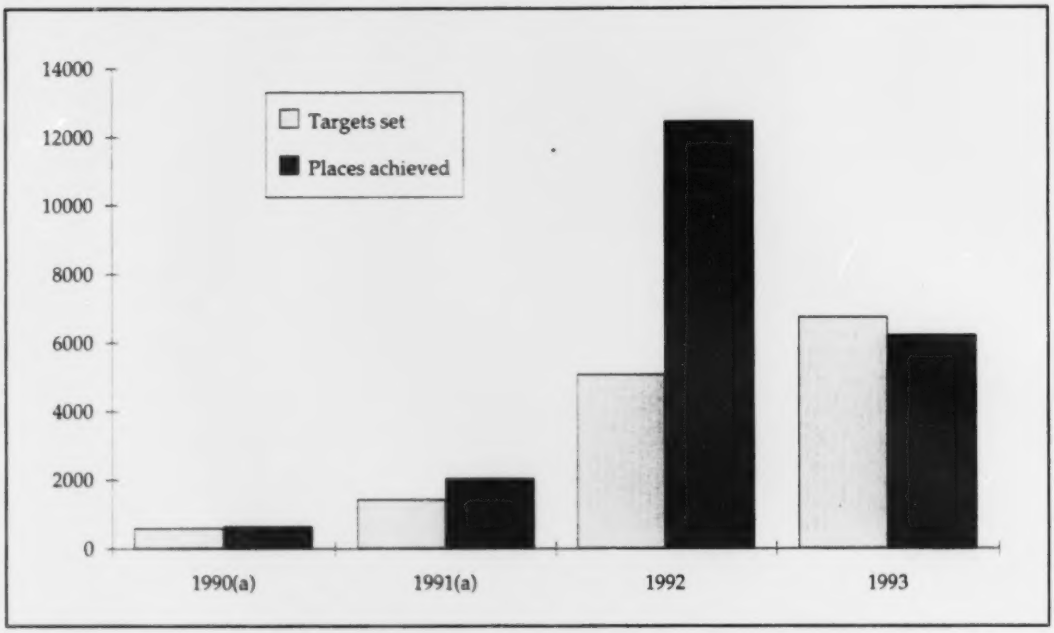
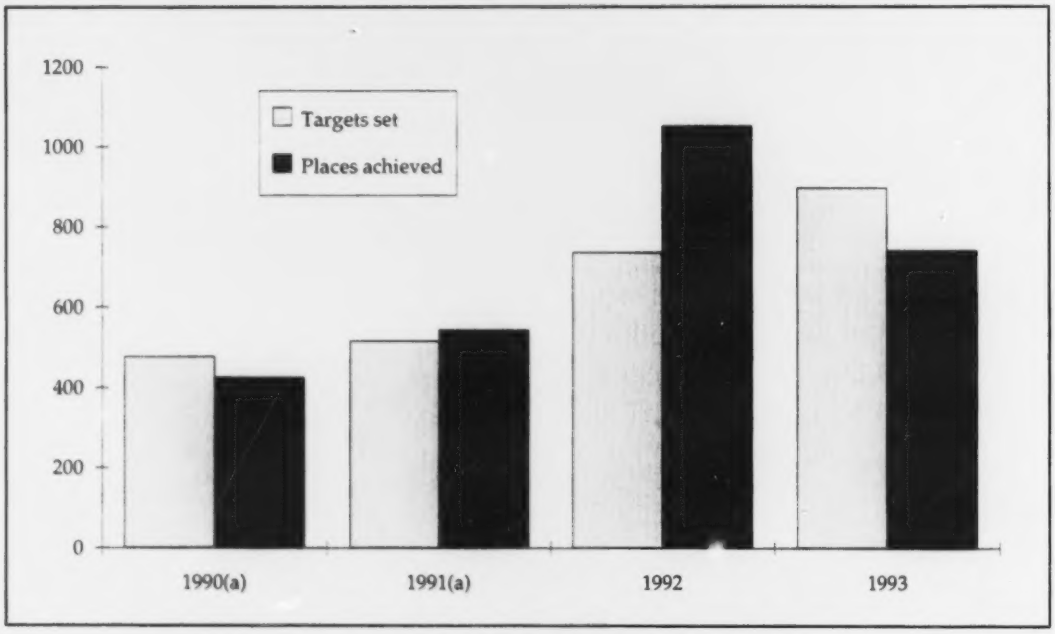


Figure 1-18: NTS targets set and places achieved, 1990-1993, for rurally isolated people



Data Source: OTFE

Figure 1-19: NTS targets set and places achieved, 1990-1993, for people with disabilities

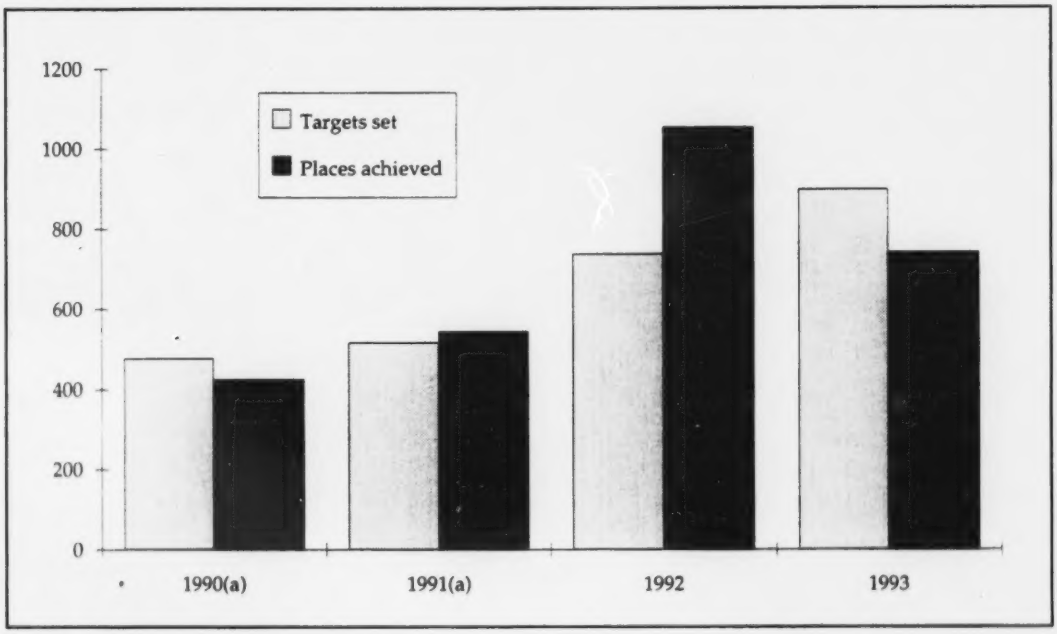
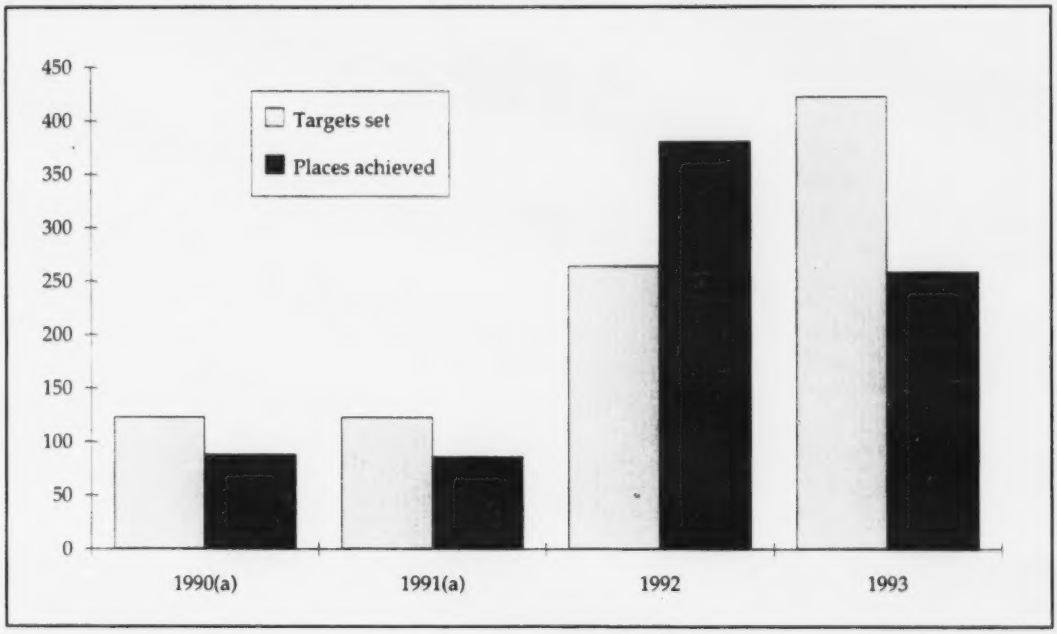


Figure 1-20: NTS targets set and places achieved, 1990-1993, for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders



Data Source: OTFE

colleges were already in the process of responding to the need identified by the general manager, which they also recognised—a good outcome for local priority setting. On the other hand, the failure to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and the removal of the institutional category after a poor response from colleges shows the limitations of local priority setting.

There do seem to be good grounds for requiring all colleges to target all NTS client groups, and for attention to be directed to those, such as the ATSI group, who seem to have missed out fairly consistently in the operation of the NTS, except in 1992.

The phenomena of multiple counting of individuals who fit several categories, and of inconsistent practice in relation to whether NTS places are additional or merely a normal outcome of representation of a particular NTS group within a college's intake is a significant defect in the NTS scheme. In reality, NTS funding is likely to be smaller than other federal or State funding for some NTS groups. Surely, there is a need for both aggregate data on the representation of NTS groups within a college's intake, and data on how the college has used particular strategies to attract and support additional NTS targeted students.

Table 1-21 brings together the data on negotiated targets strategy targets set and places achieved in the six Victorian TAFE colleges which were the subject of case studies by Ms Mitch Cleary which are reported in the next part of this paper. As the notes indicate, there are some minor discrepancies between the data available from college and OTFE records. Aggregate data from all of the Victorian colleges is also included. The data indicates that the colleges selected vary in terms of the scale of NTS activity and the pattern of outcomes achieved. The colleges selected also reflect a variety of demographic, socio-economic and curricular environments, and varied experience in the application of the NTS. The advisory committee for the project determined that these six colleges would provide a basis for case students to develop some useful insights into the operation of the NTS in Victoria.

There is an apparent bias in the six chosen case study colleges, because these six all exceeded their 1993 targets, whereas Victorian colleges generally did not do this in 1993, the year in which the case studies were undertaken. However, consideration of the performance of these colleges in other years indicates a mixed pattern of outcomes in terms of places attained against targets set, so the unusual consistency in 1993 is less significant. Furthermore, the focus of the case studies is not on the overall outcomes, but on the contextual operation of the strategy in a group of colleges. The group of colleges studied collectively reflect the diversity of the Victorian TAFE colleges, and that is an important consideration in the collective validity of the case studies.

Table 1-21: Targets set and achieved in six case-studies and all Victorian TAFE colleges, 1990–1993

	1990 (a)		1991 (a)		1992		1993	
	Targets set	Places achieved	Targets set	Places achieved	Targets set	Places achieved	Targets set	Places achieved
Box Hill	1 049	1 066	972	972	1 979	2 245	2 184	2 270(b)
East Gippsland	251	330	200	168	314	354	364	432
The Gordon	161	58	155	113	147	226	176	185©
Holmesglen	1 378	2 430	3 437	5 094	13 272	13 272	4 873	10 037(d)
Outer Eastern	173	166	232	345	442	3 834	1 240	3 066
RMIT TAFE	78	42	210	191	504	374	545	1 310(e)
All Victorian TAFE colleges	8 521	10 786	9 148	10 823	26 643	44 035	29 040	24 320

Note: (a) 1990 and 1991 totals include 'institutionalised' category
(b) College records in Table 2-1 show 2 224, OTFE records in Table 1-11 show 2 270
© College records in Table 2-3 show 213, OTFE records in Table 1-11 show 185
(d) College records in Table 2-4 show 9 448, OTFE records in Table 1-11 show 10 037
(e) College records in Table 2-6 show 707, OTFE records in Table 1-11 show 1 310

Data source: OTFE

2 Six case studies

Introduction

The first part of this paper has outlined the evolution of the negotiated targets strategy (NTS) in the Victorian TAFE system, and assessed the outcomes of the strategy on the basis of state-wide data from 1990 to 1993. This second part briefly surveys the NTS action plans produced by Victorian TAFE colleges, and reports on case studies of the application of the NTS in six Victorian TAFE colleges in 1993.

The 1992 NTS action plans were produced by each college as comprehensive strategic planning documents. Within the context of the statewide policy, individual colleges could develop their own policy and set their own priorities for action through these action plans. Full action plans were not required in 1993 or for 1994. Rather, clear objectives and brief statements of specific NTS Support Strategies were requested with associated achievement targets. The key strategies are agreed between the Office of Training and Further Education (OTFE) and colleges through College Performance Agreements. Funding was allocated to colleges through the Performance Agreement process. The amount of NTS funds received by a college was dependent on a formula including college size, range of NTS groups targeted and the college's past performance in achieving NTS targets. During 1993 college allocations varied between $10 000 and $37 500 with the majority of colleges receiving approximately $30 000. In developing the 1993 Performance Plans colleges were given the objective:

> *To increase the access and completion rates of under represented groups in mainstream accredited vocational programs.*

For 1994 most colleges responded to the budget review process request to indicate major strategies for the implementation of the NTS and to indicate targets set for places in the NTS categories. No detail of places by target group by course was required by the OTFE. In discussions, below the term action plan is taken to mean targets set and strategies outlined towards achieving those targets over the last three years. The 1994 strategies and targets are also referred to below. The action plans and college performance agreement statements were reviewed so as to provide information about the type of strategies being undertaken by colleges as part of the implementation of the NTS. The information given in the tables provided for each of the case study colleges indicates the numerical targets set in action plans for 1993 and 1994.

Action plans

An analysis of 1993 action plans shows that the targeted places varied from 42 to 4 873. These targets were set in 1992. By June 1993, 18 colleges reported that they had achieved more than their target for the whole year, with several colleges indicating that their target had been achieved twice over. This may indicate that colleges are counting students who fit the NTS target groups but who are not taking up negotiated places within programs. This is analysed in further detail in the case study reports.

Resources allocated to colleges vary between $10 000 and $35 000 with a total of $600 000 being distributed for 1993. There is no direct correlation between allocation of funds and numbers of places targeted. Funds are not allocated on the basis of a certain dollar figure per place allocated but rather for broader strategies designed to improve participation rates.

Colleges on average listed 4 support strategies in their reports to the OTFE. When the action plans are analysed as a group there are approximately 120 separate strategies listed. These can be broken down in the following way:

53	General (not specific to one target group e.g. increase counselling services, develop tracking systems to record NTS students)
24	Disabilities
14	Women
9	Koories/ Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders
9	NESB
6	Rurally Isolated
3	Long-term unemployed
1	Sole supporting parents

It should be noted that these strategies are only the ones that the colleges have listed in the NTS action plans. The colleges must report during the year on progress towards the achievement of particular targets for each strategy. Analysing strategies in a different way it can be said that the majority of strategies are directly related to student support through increased counselling, literacy programs, buddy tutoring systems, sign interpreters, note takers, large print publishing etc. Other strategies centre around marketing the NTS and in particular marketing specific programs for specific groups. One example is the printing and distribution to local schools of a brochure targeted at young women advertising electronics programs at the college.

No comprehensive analysis has been undertaken to date as to the relative success of particular strategies in leading to increased participation by disadvantaged groups. Although individual case study colleges claim greater success for some strategies than others,

the same strategy does not necessarily produce the same result at a different college. The data available is insufficient to determine why this is so. It could be that the commitment to implementation of the strategy varies or that other factors relating to the target group or the program area differ from college to college. The action plans alone are insufficient to develop a list of colleges which could be ranked according to their ability to deliver on NTS targets and strategies. Action plans consist of targets set for particular target groups as well as support strategies for the implementation of the NTS. The strategies listed by colleges are often not directly linked to a particular numerical target for one group. For example, a college may list the extension of student counselling hours as a support strategy, or staff development for teachers about the Negotiated Targets Strategy and needs of students from the targeted groups, or the development of a data base system to record and track targeted students within the college, rather than explain by use of a specific strategy how it intends to try to reach a target of 25 Koorie students. The then current reporting arrangements did not require colleges to inform the OTFE of this level of detail. Thus there are limits to the usefulness of the action plans as an evaluative tool.

In 1993 the difficulty of defining accurately and consistently membership of the targeted groups was dealt with by guidelines produced by the OTFE, which were described in Section 1. After making the point that consistency across the State Training System is essential for the implementation of the NTS, the guidelines go on to clarify the negotiated targets strategy with the following definitions:

Negotiated Targets Strategy students:
Those students who are selected and take up NTS negotiated and targeted places in accredited vocational courses. For reporting purposes only, these students are to be counted as NTS targets achieved.

Negotiated Targets Strategy targeted places:
Those places that are negotiated and set aside in accredited vocational programs, to be filled by students from target groups identified in the NTS. For reporting purposes only, these places are to be counted as NTS targets set.

Negotiated Targets Strategy target achieved:
To be counted as an NTS target achieved, the enrolment must be of an NTS student in an NTS negotiated and targeted place, as defined in these guidelines.

The guidelines go on to give definitions of each of the NTS target groups (see Attachment 2).

The NTS has the aim of increasing the participation of the targeted groups in education and training. Without any statement to the contrary the policy implies that the seven targeted groups are equally disadvantaged and that those people who do not belong to any of the targeted groups are more advantaged. An analysis of college action

plans indicates that the seven groups are not equally targeted. There is no system priority for any one of the groups. There is no system requirement to target all groups. College priorities may vary from year to year. Although it might be assumed from this that the NTS designates some groups who are *in* and others who are *out*, when the overall profile of the college is examined the targeted groups may be represented in other programs. The NTS funding is relatively small compared to other sources of funding relating to some of the targeted groups. A college which has not targeted long-term unemployed people amongst its NTS targets may be receiving Commonwealth funding to conduct targeted programs. Such targeted programs cannot be included as NTS figures, although as will be seen later some double reporting apparently occurs.

Case studies

The colleges chosen for the case studies provide a reasonable cross-section of the Victorian college system. They represent a diversity of approaches to achieving strategies set out in their NTS action plans. Some colleges possibly have better overall strategies whereas others have more focussed strategies and a history of practice which encourages participation by local people from one particular under-represented group. The case studies themselves focussed on the action plans obtaining more detail from colleges about how each particular target is set and what specific strategies are implemented at what level of the college's operations to ensure that the target is achieved.

The six TAFE college case studies were conducted by a process of structured interviews/consultations with key stakeholders, including teachers and managers to obtain qualitative data about the success of the program. They also involved a review of each case study college's action plans and any documentation available about local activities and initiatives.

Interviews with students admitted to programs through a college-based negotiated targets strategy were initially part of the proposed methodology, however this was rejected after it became apparent that identifying such students would be extremely difficult in most cases. It was also apparent that most students admitted through NTS were not aware of the fact that they occupied a targeted place.

Visits to each of the case study colleges were made during November and December 1993, with some follow-up telephone interviews early in 1994. Interviews were undertaken with staff at the colleges who are listed in Attachment 1.

Some of the theme issues which arise from the case study colleges, and which are taken up later in the report, include:

- Reporting bias through inclusion of non-targeted disadvantaged clients. It is extremely difficult to draw conclusions based on the statistical information provided as some reports include any individual student who belongs to the target group while others only list those occupying a targeted place.
- The importance of the NTS as a consciousness raising tool amongst staff. Although this was often mentioned by those interviewed it is difficult to test.
- The relatively poor tracking systems in colleges to enable a student's progress through courses to be evaluated. In no college was it possible to identify students occupying NTS places in any systematic way and track their progress so that comparisons could be made between students from a particular target group occupying targeted places versus those from the same group who had entered the college without occupying a place.

Box Hill College of TAFE

As described in Section 1, the NTS grew out of a pilot scheme conducted at Box Hill in 1987. Box Hill is situated about 14 kilometres east of the centre of Melbourne. In 1992 there were 450 full-time equivalent teaching staff members, 250 full-time equivalent other staff and almost 23 000 students. With 4 600 000 student hours it is a very large and diverse college. At the time of the case study, it was the designated provider college for electrical and electronics as well as having considerable strengths in building, computing, engineering, hospitality and rural programs. The college had a close correlation between targeted and achieved figures for 1991, 1992 and 1993. During 1993, $35 000 was provided to the college for NTS activities.

Its 1993 negotiated target strategies as stated in its report to the OTFE were:

Providing specific integration support for NESB and hearing-impaired students with a target set of a 90 per cent continuation rate.

Provide staff development for staff with NTS clients.

Ensure equity considerations are included in College Selection Policy and Procedures.

Targets and priorities set at division/department level, in consultation with NTS committee.

Table 2-1: NTS targets set and achieved - Box Hill College of TAFE, 1993

Targeted group	NTS target 1993	Achieved 1993	NTS target 1994
Women	850	860	860
Koorie	14	4	8
Disability	110	120	120
SSP	180	210	210
LTU	235	240	240
NESB	750	750	750
Rural Isolated	45	40	45
Total	2184	2224	2233

The figures

There was a close correlation between targets and achievements in 1993, according to these figures. Like many other colleges, Box Hill seems to have drawn its targets from 1994 by using its achieved figures for the previous year and setting modest targets for improvement in Koorie and rurally isolated categories. In the case of Koorie students, the target set in 1993 of 14 individuals was thought to be unreasonably high and after the enrolment of only four Koorie students in the places set aside in 1993, the target was revised for 1994. However, the figures themselves were questioned by staff interviewed.

They claimed that the implementation of the NTS was not occurring strictly in line with the 1993 NTS Guidelines. Negotiation with heads of departments did occur to identify places but it was thought that some of the figures above included individuals from target groups who had entered programs but were not occupying targeted places. This could happen quite easily as the difference between a student from a targeted group occupying a targeted place, and a student from a targeted group who had entered the program through the normal selection system is not identified on enrolment forms. Staff acknowledged that individual teachers might know the students who were occupying targeted places. However, they argued that to designate them formally in some way (e.g. on enrolment forms) so that they could be tracked more easily through the system could lead to them being stigmatised.

Unlike many other metropolitan colleges, Box Hill does set aside places for rurally-isolated students. The fact that it conducts some rural industry courses such as Horse Studies and Veterinary Nursing may account for this.

Targeting students

Staff interviewed at Box Hill reported on the snowballing effect of including hearing-impaired students. One student began a program several years ago and in the efforts to find support for him, staff developed a relationship between the college and local advocacy services. This led to other hearing-impaired students being referred to the college. The staff felt that as with other areas of expertise, such as course design or quality of teaching, they were benefiting from referrals from current and former students. The staff at the college were developing expertise with this particular client group and prospective students were able to recognise that expertise and were attracted to the college. Staff believed that their expertise in this area could be utilised in staff development programs involving other colleges and that staff from Box Hill could learn from strategies successfully used with other target groups in different colleges.

The implications of this for the way the NTS system operates with the OTFE need to be considered. As mentioned earlier, there is no attempt by the OTFE to value one targeted group more highly than another. Each college enters into an individual agreement between itself and the OTFE about what it will deliver in this area. Over time it is inevitable that some colleges will develop expertise with one or more target groups. There is currently no statewide system which encourages the sharing of that expertise.

Most of Box Hill's 1993 NTS budget was allocated to NESB support, directly to students and by conducting staff development in cross-cultural awareness. Approximately 20 per cent was apportioned for note takers for the hearing-impaired students and for study support such as a second person in examinations for other students with special needs. The budget was in the control of the manager, Organisation Development and Equity. Centralising control of the NTS allocation meant that overall college priorities in the area could be set by someone with an equity perspective.

College staff at Box Hill raised concerns about completion rates as a proposed measure to be used in future funding arrangements. They felt that a notion of a normal time for completion of a program would discriminate against a student with some type of special need and that even when some degree of educational failure was recorded, success in self esteem and social skills could be achieved by almost all students, regardless of the level of their disability. This concern seemed to arise out of a misunderstanding about intentions of the OTFE in undertaking some research into completion rates but indicates the importance of communication within the vocational education and training system.

The selection processes in use for different courses vary at Box Hill. The importance of selection as an issue for NTS students cannot be overestimated. Selection for NTS students still meant that these people had to meet eligibility requirements as stated in course documents or prove that they had equivalent skills. Where there was

any doubt, the bottom line seemed to be a reasonable chance of success. Staff were adamant that students were not to be set up to fail. It was generally accepted that more work needed to be done in the area of student selection in ensuring that selection processes were open to scrutiny and were fair to all applicants. The manager, Organisation Development and Equity was in the process of collecting and documenting the selection processes for every course in the college.

The implementation and impact of the NTS

One staff member described the NTS as:

> *a journey to a total change of attitude. Some people start at different places from others but we all have to get to a situation where we have a non-discriminatory environment for learning. We must be conscious of the barriers we put in the way of people, whether that is in terms of selection mechanisms or of facilities when they are here.*

Reflecting on the history of NTS several staff commented that for such a large college it was imposed too quickly and too extensively, trying to change the whole college in one semester. In retrospect they believed it would have been better to refine the model with one or two departments. Initially there was resentment by heads of departments and pressure to perform statistically may have led to the reporting of statistics covering all disadvantaged students, rather than only those occupying NTS targeted places.

When asked to give an overall assessment of the impact of the NTS, staff interviewed believed that it had promoted a change in the student profile seen most dramatically in more obvious participation by students with physical disabilities in college programs. No statistical support for this contention was available. Staff interviewed expressed the idea that it was difficult to view the effects of the NTS in isolation from other special funding arrangements, such as Commonwealth money for unemployment programs, Koorie programs, or students with disabilities, but it was seen as the essential framework around which each of these specific programs could be seen to make sense. How the NTS actually does this was more difficult to define. The most commonly stated ideas were that the NTS was a very public statement by the OTFE of its intention to promote participation by disadvantaged groups and involved each course selection officer or head of department to justify their student profile. They believed that the intent of the OTFE was to change the college profile through the NTS and that that has been achieved over the four years from 1990 to 1993.

The role of the OTFE

Staff complained about the statistical reporting requirements of the OTFE and argued that in terms of the college's total budget the NTS allocation was very small, yet required more justification in terms of statistics than other larger budget areas. There was a perception that performance in the NTS was being too narrowly judged by statistics on full-time places only and that aspects of the NTS of which college

staff felt particularly proud, such as their counselling services and their expertise with hearing-impaired students, received little or no recognition.

Future directions

According to those interviewed, the NTS was unnecessarily restrictive in that it separated students who occupied NTS places from other students who in many ways may need the same level of extra support. The next stage then, should involve refining systems which could identify students in need of support regardless of whether they occupied an NTS place or not and to market the plan to industry. Particularly during the recession when extra employment subsidies have been made available to industry to employ someone with a disability or from one of the targeted groups it was felt that colleges should be marketing the NTS to industry, saying that 'if you employ someone with a disability we have the resources and experience to train that person for you'. Often TAFE college personnel have claimed that they are unable to influence employers, particularly in the case of girls as apprentices in non-traditional trades. However, staff interviewed at Box Hill believed it was possible to do so and gave examples from their own experience. A large multinational electronics firm in the area was sponsoring scholarships for women already working in the industry, usually as process workers, to go on to study electronics at TAFE and or university level.

In the future Box Hill will expand its Negotiated Targets Strategy Committee to become an Educational Support Forum. This is because staff involved have realised that the NTS students were only a small proportion of the total student population requiring educational support. Students themselves had become confused about what support was available to whom under what circumstances.

In summary staff interviewed believed that the NTS was a vehicle around which debate about more general access and equity issues could be conducted, that it provided a framework for each department in the college to reflect on its student profile in each of its courses and had caused an attitudinal change amongst staff over the medium to long term.

East Gippsland Community College of TAFE

The East Gippsland Community College of TAFE commenced operations in 1986. Serving a region which covers around 14 per cent of the area of Victoria, the college has major campuses in Sale and Bairnsdale, approximately 300 kilometres east of Melbourne and Outreach centres in Mallacoota, Orbost, Lakes Entrance, Buchan, Swifts Creek and Omeo. The college is the statewide designated provider in the fields of forestry-forest products and fishing training. In 1992 it had 51 equivalent full-time teaching staff, 24 part-time instructors, as well as approximately 6 000 students and 300,000 student hours. In 1993, $28 000 was provided through NTS funding.

Its 1993 Negotiated Target Strategies were:

To provide support to Koorie students

Provide integration co-ordination and support to students with disabilities

To ensure isolated students have access to accredited programs through increased flexible delivery.

Table 2-2: NTS targets set and achieved—East Gippsland College of TAFE, 1993

Targeted group	NTS target 1993	Achieved 1993	NTS target 1994
Women	40	35	35
Koorie	45	97	25
Disability	20	27	30
SSP	35	30	30
LTU	120	115	100
NESB	4	4	4
Rural Isolated	100	124	120
Total	364	432	344

The figures

The significantly lower figures targeted for Koorie students and long-term unemployed students for 1994 were because in both these areas targeted programs for the target groups were running. Thus the overall number of Koorie students and long-term unemployed students in the college was expected to dramatically increase in the college but numbers of people occupying targeted places in broader based programs would then fall. This indicates one of the problems with attempting to use reports of the NTS as the only measure of access and equity. The targeted programs had arisen out of considerable effort on behalf of college staff and management to better provide for these targeted groups. By doing so, they no longer have those targeted places counted as NTS targets achieved.

Staff interviewed agreed that the implementation of the NTS was not occurring strictly in line with the 1993 NTS Guidelines. Negotiations with heads of departments did occur to identify places but it was thought that some of the figures above included individuals from target groups who had entered programs but were not occupying targeted places. The fact that colleges are asked to set targets in July/August for the following year meant that after targets were set they were sometimes changed to other target groups as a result of

applications arriving from these groups, thus affecting the reported figures. Staff interviewed felt that this flexibility in being able to alter the targeted numbers on the basis of applications received was important.

Implementation and impact of the NTS

When the NTS was introduced at East Gippsland there was initial confusion in the college with some teachers and heads of departments believing that they were being forced to find at least one member of each of the targeted groups for each program running in that department. There was no clear direction given to the college about how to interpret the definitions of the target groups and it was generally understood that it did not matter whether these individuals met the eligibility requirements for programs, they were still to be admitted. As a result there were several students who dropped out or failed the course. Although by introducing the NTS in this way problems arose, many staff agreed that the setting of targets opened up discussion about how best to provide access for members of disadvantaged groups and how to provide support for those individuals when they became students of the college. The overall impression of staff interviewed was that the existence of the NTS had led to changed attitudes and that those programs which had agreed to target students had increased the numbers of targeted places over time.

Targeting students

Most resources provided by the NTS had gone into the salary of a disabilities liaison officer as well as providing funds for a support worker for some students with disabilities. This appeared to be because there had been an existing lobby to support students with disabilities at the time of the introduction of the NTS and funding had then become available to employ someone. That person's ongoing employment had since been linked to ongoing funding from the NTS.

Physically and intellectually disabled students were present in business and secretarial programs at the college. There were two students in the Residential and Community Services program with learning difficulties. Both students were volunteers in community—based organisations and were therefore ideally suited for the course in which they had enrolled. One of the students had refused to meet the integration co-ordinator and was adamant that he did not want support and saw it as somehow cheating the system.

A number of accredited Koorie programs were being conducted at the college including the Advanced Certificate in Koorie Art & Design. It was considered unlikely that the figure quoted above for NTS achieved Koorie places in 1993 was correct in that it probably covered students in targeted programs as well as the small number of students who had entered targeted places in other accredited programs. Staff argued that considerable time, effort and resources had gone in to establishing these targeted programs to best meet the

needs of the local Koorie community but that there was no recognition for this under the NTS.

In terms of women's access to non-traditional areas, the case of the Advanced Certificate in Wood Design was quoted. The course, which is conducted in only two colleges in the State had all male students at the start of the NTS. The first two female students targeted through a general advertising program, which indicated that 'non-traditional' programs were open to women were successful. After that, the numbers of women enrolled had continued to increase so that now there were 6 to 8 female students in a group of 20. ABS figures for the region showed low numbers of non-English-speaking background (NESB) people in the population but recently an English as a second language (ESL) class for women has attracted a larger number than expected. Again, students in this class, because it is targeted for the group as a whole, would not be counted as occupying NTS targeted places. If they went on to study another program at the college, they could then be counted as occupying a targeted place. This system of negotiating between heads of access or language departments for students from a targeted program to enter a mainstream program as an occupant of a targeted place was widespread in the colleges visited.

The role of the OTFE

Criticisms of the OTFE's management of the NTS centred on:

- The way in which statistics were collected. Up until 1993 there were not clear instructions for colleges about who was to be counted and who was not. The statistics were only requested in the broad sense, i.e. total numbers of people from a particular group targeted rather than a breakdown into department or course areas. According to those interviewed, this encouraged some colleges to be vague in their statistical response and work on estimates rather than defined numbers. Statistics were only collected from those occupying a full-time place in an accredited program. There was disagreement with the focus of NTS being on full-time places and strong arguments put that the majority of students from the groups targeted would wish to study part-time. Also without the strategy applying to part-time students, those managing the implementation of the NTS in the college felt that some departments were not required or encouraged to address access issues as they conducted no full-time courses. It was clear to those interviewed that, in order to best meet the needs for an educational program of (for instance) a student with a severe learning disability, or a sole supporting parent with school age children, a staff member would not counsel them to undertake a full-time course. Therefore that student would not be counted as occupying a targeted place. Staff interviewed felt that the NTS was in fact encouraging colleges to give incorrect advice to students so as to increase the number of targeted places filled, or encouraging colleges to 'fudge their figures' so as to include these people.

- The perception that only numbers were important. Along with staff from other colleges the East Gippsland staff complained that the OTFE was *'only interested in numbers'*, and suggested that reporting procedures should include case studies of success stories of individual students.

- Dates by which colleges were asked to set targets. A community-based rural college requires flexibility to meet local demand. Setting targets in July or August for the following year on a course by target group level was seen to be too rigid. The definition of rurally-isolated was also questioned as many students were 70 kilometres away from the nearest campus. Travel time was seen as a better indicator of isolation as a student living significantly less than 20km from the nearest campus would not be able to participate without transport. The college's main activities to provide access for rurally isolated students were based around the provision of Outreach Centres, the provision of classes through telematics and other flexible modes of delivery. Students studying through the Outreach Centres were almost invariably part-time students and therefore ineligible to be counted as occupying NTS-targeted places according to the OTFE guidelines.

Future directions

The college staff interviewed would like to expand and extend provision for rurally-isolated students. They would like to continue the work with students with disabilities in the area and create stronger links between targeted Koorie programs and other college programs. They would like to see changes in the way reporting to the OTFE is managed and more recognition for the wider variety of access activities undertaken by those at the college, such as the college's network of Outreach Centres in order to provide access for rurally-isolated people and its provision of part time programs for disadvantaged groups.

Gordon Technical College

Victoria's second largest city with a population of about 125 000, Geelong is situated approximately 75 kilometres south-west of Melbourne. The college has a major campus in the centre of the city, some other smaller campuses in Geelong, another campus at Colac, 70 kilometres further west, and other Outreach centres in the region. There is a history of a close relationship between targeted and achieved NTS figures. During 1993, $30 000 was provided to the college for NTS implementation.

Established in 1885 as the Geelong Mechanics Institute, the first students enrolled in the Geelong Technological School and School of Art and Design in 1887. The name was changed to the Gordon Institute of Technology in 1921, and continued until 1977 when the advanced education part of the institute joined the new Deakin University and the TAFE part of the institute was reconstituted as the Gordon Technical College. Its local name is simply 'The Gordon'.

Teaching and student statistics for 1992 were: Teaching staff 222 (FTE), other staff 161 (FTE) part-time instructors 248; students 13 297 individuals 2 396 965 student hours.

Negotiated Target Strategies for 1993 were:

Provide training for staff in Teaching Strategies for NTS students in four units: Koories, people with disabilities, women in non-traditional areas and people from non English-speaking backgrounds.

Provide two scholarships and associated services for Koorie students in statewide accredited courses.

Investigate and report on the education and training needs of geographically isolated students.

Table 2-3: Targets set and achieved—The Gordon, 1993

Targeted group	NTS target 1993	Achieved 1993	NTS target 1994
Women	45	32	74
Koorie	6	1	9
Disability	17	17	21
SSP	15	23	27
LTU	51	116	67
NESB	30	23	40
Rural Isolated	12	1	7
Total	176	213	245

The figures

The Gordon follows the instructions set out in the 1993 OTFE Guidelines very closely in setting targets for courses. Negotiations take place with heads of departments. Some heads of departments interviewed indicated that the process was based on discussions within the department about who they should target, others that it was a more casual guess at an appropriate figure. Confident that the targeted figures were based on true negotiation, staff were not so confident of the achieved figures, which they believed could include those not occupying targeted places in particular programs.

Implementation and impact of the NTS

Staff at the college interviewed agreed that when the NTS was first introduced in 1989 there were concerns that it may 'water down the quality' of programs by 'lowering entry standards'. However, the history of success of individuals who had been admitted to programs

through the NTS had reduced that anxiety and there was a more obvious commitment by staff to the NTS now.

Staff interviewed could almost all refer to one or more success stories, sometimes two or three years old which had for them a significant impact on their own view of the NTS.

It was also stated that the NTS helped to change the focus of departments which had existed prior to its implementation. One example given was that of the Women's Access department which had changed from conducting personal enrichment programs to conducting pre-vocational programs and concentrating on mainstreaming students into other programs in the college. It was felt that the NTS could act as a focus or a trigger for such changes but that it was impossible to separate its causative function from that of other programs. There was strong support amongst staff interviewed for the notion of the NTS as a type of consciousness raising; that it provided a structure and a focus for all of the college's activities in the area of access and equity.

The support strategies, which had evolved over time at the Gordon, and were designed to meet the needs of NTS students, were financial support, counselling support and learning support. The general perception was that the NTS was worthwhile, that departments were aware of it and were consciously involved in targeting.

Role of the OTFE

Almost all staff expressed an irritation that the people stories were not being heard and several proposed that case studies of successful NTS students, coupled with qualitative information about programs conducted by staff should be collated and distributed among colleges as best practice examples. They saw this as a responsibility of the OTFE as parts of its role in co-ordinating the NTS. There was resentment expressed at the lack of recognition given to initiatives taken by colleges outside Melbourne and criticism of a perceived metropolitan bias of the OTFE.

Reporting arrangements were perceived as cumbersome and difficult, in line with all statistical reporting arrangements between colleges and the OTFE. It was felt that a better data recording system should be introduced as the recording of statistics took teachers away from other tasks. One proposal was that a college which had shown a reasonably close relationship between its targeted and achieved figures for two or three years, such as the Gordon, should be exempt from reporting for say three years. Although this could be regarded as anti-OTFE rhetoric, it was an argument that some reward ought to be offered to colleges perceived to be delivering on the NTS and that the removal of what was seen as an onerous task would be one way of doing this. Such a system would, however, leave the college potentially with no way of evaluating its own performance in this area.

Targeting students

As previously mentioned, some examples of successful programs occurring at the Gordon involving students from NTS target groups include those being conducted by the Women's Access Centre. A Bridging Into Technology (BIT) program run as a one semester, four day a week program has been running for about seven years at the college. Approximately 60 per cent of students continue in either full-time or part-time study, some entering accredited full-time programs through NTS places, while others entered in the standard manner. A very high proportion of these students are supported by the Commonwealth Employment Service either as sole supporting parents or as long-term unemployed. The success of this program has led to the development of another, Bridging Into Business Studies and Information Technology (BIBSIT). Another popular program conducted by the centre is the Introduction to Further Study (IFS). Some students undertake the IFS program first before entering BIT or BIBSIT, while others have gone from the IFS course, directly into nursing at nearby Deakin university for example. There was some dissatisfaction expressed that a student going from a non-accredited Introduction to Further Study into a university program was not really counted as a statistical success by the OTFE.

The perception of those working in the Women's Access department was that it was getting easier to move students into the mainstream, partly because there was now a history of students who had been through various bridging programs and had then succeeded in mainstream programs and partly because there was a mechanism, the NTS, which provided the doorway for students. Success stories included a BIT graduate who had gone on to become an electrical apprentice with a large company in Geelong, and was now in the third year of her apprenticeship undertaking her coursework at the Gordon, students who had gone on to the Bachelor of Technology program at Ballarat University College, and one who had moved through BIT to Civil Engineering and was now working as an assistant civil engineer in a local shire.

Those working in the Women's Access centre agreed that it was easier to negotiate places for students in some courses or departments in the college than others and that this normally depended on a combination of personalities, and personal experience with the client group. Once one or two students had been accepted it was usually easier to negotiate the next group as such students, having come through the access centre, were well prepared for further study and had developed support mechanisms in the college.

In the electronics department there had been targeting of both women and students from non English-speaking backgrounds, (NESB). The general attrition rate of this two year full-time course had been approximately 65 per cent. This was thought to be because of the low skill levels of most applicants, particularly the lack of mathematics and physics. Mature age students who had undertaken bridging

programs, especially those who had done the BIT course were more likely to succeed. Those interviewed in the electronics department accepted the NTS as policy and felt that its implementation with the inclusion of ideas such as staff development was a good idea but one which was hard to fit into busy timetables and other demands. It was stressed though that all staff must know and understand the principles. Otherwise those who criticise the policy can operate on other's ignorance and they may be more vocal.

The NESB students coming through full-time English classes, such as English for Further Study were usually referred to particular departments with some sort of reference or test result from their English program to demonstrate their proficiency in English. There was however considerable difficulty for selection officers in determining the level of English required for their program. At the beginning of a program an individual may have low level English skills but be showing a fast rate of improvement. Judging whether that high rate of improvement would be enough to achieve success in the program was difficult. A new approach had been tried by the language area during 1993 with stream studies occupying one third of the full-time English course. Mainstream teachers from departments teaching computing, social and community studies, small business management and others would come and teach the students directly. This system promoted personal links between teachers and students, as well as providing staff development in teaching students with language difficulties and experience in seeing their improvement in skills over time. Newly arrived migrants or refugees who were learning English seemed to be those most aware of the NTS. They would tend to apply for a great number of courses, spurred on by the notion of gaining qualifications and employment.

The Certificate of Work Education was being conducted at the Gordon and most students were direct applicants from schools or referred by rehabilitation services in the region. Those working directly with students with disabilities in the college claimed that there were about 60 students with disabilities, although not all were in NTS places. Many were undertaking programs on a part-time basis and therefore would not show up in NTS statistics. Staff development was seen as important but it was often emphasised that the best staff development any teacher could have was the experience of a student with disabilities in his or her classroom.

The Gordon provided a support unit for students with learning difficulties. This was important for some NTS and other students. However, funding of the unit was under pressure because the assistance provided was not recorded under standard contact hours for recognising courses. That meant that the Gordon had to fund the unit from college resources.

Future directions

Staff interviewed agreed that in future the Gordon should develop a strategy to combine all its activities in the access and equity area.

These activities and personnel include designated program areas for people with disabilities, women and Koories as well as an equal opportunity officer and the NTS. More clearly targeting the Koorie community in and around Geelong by providing information about how the NTS works as well as about Koorie-targeted programs was seen as one priority.

Holmesglen College of TAFE

Holmesglen is situated about 15km east of Melbourne city. A large and diverse college, it is the designated provider college for building, construction and furnishing. Holmesglen pioneered the weekend delivery of over thirty full-time and part-time programs in such areas as Business Studies, Information Technology, Building and Construction, adult upper secondary (Victorian Certificate of Education) and English language. In 1992 there were 240 equivalent full-time teaching staff and 137 part-time instructors. In 1992 there were approximately 18 000 students and 3 000 000 student hours. In 1993 $30 000 was provided for NTS activities. Holmesglen has the highest number of targeted places of any college and achieved twice the number targeted in 1993. The 1993 strategies include:

Classes involving NTS personnel to be formally introduced to Student Services staff during orientation.

All students to be provided with information concerning student services at time of enrolment.

Provide language support services for students from NESB.

Table 2-4: NTS targets set and achieved—Holmesglen College of TAFE, 1993

Targeted group	NTS target 1993	Achieved 1993	NTS target 1994
Women	2000	3526	2200
Koorie	10	8	8
Disability	38	180	44
SSP	175	305	195
LTU	1300	1855	1500
NESB	1350	3574	2000
Rural Isolated	0	0	0
Total	4873	9448	5947

The figures

These figures indicate that Holmesglen is setting overall targets for the representation of disadvantaged groups within the college

student profile, listed in the first column, and then in the second column, reporting on the actual representation. The college believes that this is a more appropriate way of increasing access for disadvantaged groups than negotiating individual places in particular courses.

Implementation and impact of the NTS

Holmesglen has a commitment to increasing access for the disadvantaged but did not implement the NTS rigidly according to the 1993 guidelines. If it had followed the guidelines, the numbers quoted in the figures above would be smaller. The college has increasing numbers of women, students with disabilities, long-term unemployed and students with a non-English-speaking background. However, these individuals do not occupy negotiated targeted places in full-time vocational programs.

In late 1993 the college reported that numbers of apprentices have dropped, from a high in excess of 3 000 in 1990 to 1500-1600 in 1993. This indicates a fall in employment and training opportunities for that group. The college focusses on providing individuals with courses which will assist them to find employment in a high unemployment period by ensuring that all sections of the community have improved information about what is available through marketing information in schools and in the wider community.

The promotion of pre-apprenticeship courses, and Certificate of Occupational Studies courses; enhancing the education of young students, both male and female, Australian born and non-Australian born, with additional skill development through leadership programs such as Outward Bound, Young Achievement Australia, and the development of a Small Enterprise program piloted in 1993, creating greater university articulation, and piloting Victorian (Year 12) Certificate of Education (VCE) studies in TAFE are all areas demonstrating the college's commitment to access and equity outside the Negotiated Targets Strategy of the OTFE.

A college response to a questionnaire about the NTS during 1993 includes the statement that:

> *The philosophy which operates at Holmesglen is to maximise opportunities for access and success by all sectors of the community. We believe that targeting what were identified minority groups at one point in time is not relevant in the climate of the 1990s.*

Targeting students

The college has expended considerable time, money and effort to attract women to the building industry with little success. The less specifically targeted strategies have brought more success in terms of overall representation of the targeted groups in the college profile. The numbers of people from targeted groups in the college profile have increased. It is possible to identify the courses in which these

students were enrolled, but this would involve a substantially greater processing of college data than OTFE required.

Holmesglen draws most of its students from five local government areas. If Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data for these five areas are reviewed then the college profile shows a higher percentage of non-English-speaking background (NESB) students than would be expected. The reputation of the college in terms of providing excellent English language support seems to draw these particular students from a wider geographic area. This would support the contention that particular target groups communicate amongst themselves as to which college provides greatest support for their particular needs. Word of mouth advertising among particular ethnic groups seems to also attract students. The provision of a self-access centre open all day and late at night, including a mini library, language laboratory and computers funded out of overseas students money is a considerable attraction of the college. The college has a relatively long history of providing English language programs for overseas students who then often go on to university study. When these students are surveyed after they leave the college and enter university they often comment about the decrease in people-based support services at the university compared with the TAFE college. Those interviewed stated that they believed there were real problems with the definition of non-English-speaking background (NESB) students currently in use by the OTFE for the purposes of the NTS i.e.

> *. . . identifies themself as being of non-English-speaking background either by place of birth, by language spoken at home or level of proficiency in English and this has created a disadvantage to them in gaining access to and participating in an accredited vocational training program* (NTS Guidelines 1993)

For those interviewed at Holmesglen this raised the question of at what point do people whose first language is not English cease to be part of the target group? They also believed that the area of disability was the one where the greatest change had taken place in the student profile over the last several years but that this was not as a direct result of the NTS but rather that the NTS coincided with a change in the social welfare model which encouraged independence and integration rather than separation, isolation and dependence. Once again this highlights the difficulty of separating the NTS from both other strategies within a college, and wider social and environmental factors.

Role of the OTFE

Critical of the OTFE's perceived 'obsession' with numbers, Holmesglen staff believe that the college's record of achievement in providing access for students from disadvantaged groups was equally as good or better than colleges following the guidelines rigidly. The NTS budget allocation was being directed into counselling services, but it was a small amount of funding compared with other services provided by the college for students with

particular learning needs. The continuation of the NTS was not seen as in any way essential to the continued provision of these support services.

Future directions
Holmesglen senior staff believed that the college must meet the needs of those in its community in order to survive and grow. Client satisfaction would mean that word of mouth referrals would provide more students. College staff believe that the support mechanisms they have put in place for disadvantaged students are successful and that they apply to a wider group and a larger number of students than would be eligible under a strict interpretation of NTS guidelines.

Outer Eastern College of TAFE

Outer Eastern is a relatively new college, operational since 1987 with main campuses at Wantirna and Croydon about 30 kilometres east of Melbourne. Before the college began operations there had been extremely limited access to post-secondary education in this area. It has smaller Outreach centres at Healesville and Lilydale.

In 1992 there were 104 equivalent full-time teaching staff and 200 part time instructors. There were 12 000 students. During 1993, $30 000 was provided for the implementation of the NTS.

Outer Eastern's 1993 Negotiated Target Strategies were:

Maintain Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) data base, updating regularly, to record and analyse participation of target groups.

Increase level of person counselling provided for NTS students and in particular for mature aged women.

Integration support provided to students with disabilities after negotiations to establish the student's and teacher's requirements.

Provide an increased level of literacy/maths support to educationally disadvantaged students who meet NTS criteria.

The figures
Outer Eastern achieved almost three times its targeted numbers in 1993. This would indicate some counting of members of target groups enrolled but not taking up a negotiated target place. This inference was supported by those interviewed. Targets were set for 1994 on the basis of what was achieved in 1993 being compared with the original target and the target moved to account for this. None of the interviewees was particularly confident of there being a systematic analysis of the figures, but the college director subsequently advised that such an analysis would be made by the college's equal opportunity officer. Long-term unemployed were not targeted in 1994 as it was felt that they would fill a large number of places anyway and there was no need to specifically target them.

Table 2-5: NTS targets set and achieved—Outer Eastern College of TAFE, 1993

Targeted group	NTS target 1993	Achieved 1993	NTS target 1994
Women	220	341	260
Koorie	20	15	20
Disability	95	112	150
SSP	145	384	350
LTU	350	1291	0
NESB	250	673	450
Rural Isolated	160	250	250
Total	**1240**	**3066**	**1480**

Implementation and Impact of the NTS

The original college council set up in the mid-1980s had a clear objective of increasing the educational opportunities for all adults in the region. It also had clear aims of increasing the participation in education and training by women and people with disabilities. With these aims as a focus, strong links were forged with community-based providers. When the NTS was introduced in 1989 there had already been considerable work done in the area of access and equity at the college. It was then difficult for staff at the college to determine the relevant significance of each of these policy directions in determining the overall college profile. When the NTS was introduced the college established a committee to oversee the implementation in the college. As well as setting the targets, the committee became a forum for discussing implementation issues. It was made up of integration officers and some heads of centres. The college has two integration officers, one recurrently funded and one funded through the NTS.

The area of disabilities was seen as an example of where the NTS really had an impact on mainstream programs as the integration officers had set up relationships with community based disability groups and had been able to 'advertise' the existence of the NTS fairly successfully.

However the implementation of the strategy within particular departments had been varied in its success. Examples were given where teachers were not informed that a student had a severe psychiatric disability and felt completely inadequate in attempting to deal with the student. The other significant point mentioned by staff at Outer Eastern was that as a growing outer urban area, its demographic profile was changing, and over the seven years that the college had been in operation there had been a steady increase in the

number of people from non English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) in the communities surrounding the college campuses. This had led to a change in the NTS targeted places set aside for this group and had also led to a change in services provided for this target group.

The college conducts a very active Outreach program at about fourteen different locations in the greater Outer Eastern area. The first step back into education for many disadvantaged people, many found attendance at these centres to be essential to build the confidence to go on into larger programs. Negotiations occur with all departments to establish the number and location of courses they will offer in outreach centres. Although designed to reach isolated students, both in terms of geography and in terms of social isolation, these programs would not fit the definition for the NTS category of rurally isolated. This is because the OTFE would only allow to be counted individual students who had achieved places set aside for them in programs rather than programs designed by their delivery methodology to target that particular group. Strictly construed, the NTS is about targeted individual places in programs, not about targeted programs.

Targeting students

Staff at Outer Eastern College of TAFE were generally supportive of the notion of targeting disadvantaged groups through the NTS. The area of intellectual disability was seen as difficult for most teachers with examples given of some students inappropriately admitted to very demanding programs. This would seem to suggest that the process of negotiation in the NTS was somehow missing or at least under-emphasised compared with the aim of meeting an imposed target. It was suggested that the negotiation sometimes took place at the senior management level on the basis of numbers per centre, rather than in negotiating with the classroom teacher the particular needs of an individual student who may be admitted to their class.

Some people teaching in the traditional male trade areas felt that they had been unfairly attacked along the lines of 'what's wrong with you that you don't have any female students', whereas the experience of the handful of female students who had entered programs was very positive, both for the students themselves and the teachers of the course. There is evidence that women succeed in electronics at higher rates than male students. Although much outreach and publicity work had been done by the traditional male trade departments in trying to attract females, often schools had let them down by inviting them to come and speak to Year 11 students, and then when faced with a roomful of male students discovering that someone had been asked to come and speak about hospitality programs at the same time. Outer Eastern has developed credit transfer arrangements with some local secondary schools where students undertake combined Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE)/TAFE units. In the electronics program at one of these schools 55 per cent of the students

are girls. It is hoped that some of these girls will articulate into Outer Eastern College of TAFE (OECT) in the next year or two.

Teachers interviewed believed that the existence and workings of the NTS were patchily understood by staff in colleges but not understood at all by careers teachers and others advising students in schools. This was felt to be particularly important in the case of girls and students from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) who might feel that they would be at a disadvantage in applying for TAFE programs.

Role of the OTFE

Staff were strongly critical of the narrowness of the definitions as supplied by the OTFE in the 1993 guidelines. One example given was that the college had put considerable effort into conducting bridging programs and other preparatory programs for students from disadvantaged groups. These programs were seen as essential to the aim of increasing the participation of the targeted groups in mainstream accredited education and training. However, the OTFE was seen as not recognising the amount of the college's resources put into these programs. OTFE staff were seen as being obsessed with statistics of targets set and targets achieved within a narrow range of full-time state wide accredited non targeted programs.

Staff wanted case studies of individual NTS students to be developed and reported on by colleges so that a more fleshed-out reporting system could evolve. Some of those interviewed in the college felt that although they negotiated targets and worked towards them in good faith they were rarely audited by the OTFE. They were prepared to be audited if the same processes applied to all colleges as they felt that they had a good record of achievement in access issues. They saw weaknesses in the reporting arrangements in that accuracy in statistics was not encouraged. This is so despite the accountability reports that were required by, and provided to, the OTFE. Staff interviewed believed that the NTS did bring about behavioural change by changing the culture through which the TAFE college operated.

Future directions

The staff of Outer Eastern College of TAFE felt that too much time was spent on targeting numbers and reporting statistics rather than time being spent on strategic planning to attract particular groups to full-time or part-time or non-accredited bridging programs which could lead to greater chances of success in later programs. Developing better, stronger relationships with schools in the area was seen as one priority area.

Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

Established in 1887 as the Working Men's College Melbourne, the name was changed to Melbourne Institute of Technology in 1934 and to its present name of Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) in 1960. It merged with the Phillip Institute of Technology and

became a university from 1 July 1992. RMIT is a multi-campus university with about 38 000 students, in TAFE and higher education programs, leading to awards from certificates through diplomas and degrees to higher degrees. RMIT also offers offshore programs in South East Asia.

The TAFE component is referred to as RMIT–TAFE Sector. During 1993, some of the schools in the Melbourne College of Decoration were amalgamated with RMIT–TAFE Sector. RMIT–TAFE is the sole provider for a number of courses it conducts as well as being the designated provider for health programs. The designated provider system, which was changed during 1994, allowed a college to provide a curriculum and program management role in relation to programs in a particular field throughout the State.

In 1992 there were 466 equivalent full time teaching staff and 14 626 individual students as well as 4 873 000 student hours. With a major central city campus, RMIT draws students from throughout the metropolitan area and throughout Victoria.

Its 1993 Negotiated Target Strategy was:

> *provision of a buddy tutoring Program including providing support for four to six buddy tutors to approximately seven students with visual and hearing impairments.*

Table 2-6: Targets Set and Achieved—RMIT University—TAFE Sector, 1993

Targeted group	NTS Target 1993	Achieved 1993	NTS target 1994
Women	110	85	220
Koorie	30	2	6
Disability	33	82	17
SSP	70	20	7
LTU	140	189	142
NESB	162	329	20
Rural Isolated	0		0
Total	**545**	**707***	**412**

* figures in this column were compiled from those supplied directly by RMIT, not OTFE NTS returns

Note: During 1993, the Melbourne College of Decoration was amalgamated with the much larger RMIT. The 1994 targets were for the larger, post-amalgamation RMIT.

The figures

Staff consulted at RMIT were concerned about the way targets had been set in the past and during 1993 a much more comprehensive process was instigated. In the past, teams consisting of members of the NTS working party met with individual heads of departments to establish targets. The only college studied where 1994 targets were lower in all categories than those set for 1993, those involved in managing the process were adamant that the new process was going to produce real achievable targets rather than 'rubbery figures'.

Implementation and impact of the NTS

An NTS Working Party had existed in the college for some time but with the amalgamation with departments from the Melbourne College of Decoration, a new deputy director had been appointed who had responsibility for Equity in the college. Together with the equal opportunity manager they had visited each head of school at RMIT and negotiated priorities for targets in each school. For instance in the three engineering schools, women were to be the only targeted group for 1994. Heads of school were left to negotiate with heads of departments about resource issues and numbers in particular courses. This negotiation scheme was hoped to be successful as it could be seen that there was structure and authority in the process. Encouragement from the top down and a commitment from senior managers to work co-operatively towards the achievement of targets were also mentioned.

The change of focus from targets to negotiation was seen as positive for teachers. The NTS Working Party with wide representation from teaching areas, counselling and other support areas as well as senior management, sets priorities for the budget allocation from NTS. Individuals involved with the working party were advocates for the NTS and for disadvantaged students and were able to talk to other staff about the requirements of the system.

Targeting students

An allocation from the NTS budget during 1993 had made possible the employment of a project officer for a short period of time to organise and promote a one day 'Try a Trade Day' for girls in secondary schools in the north and western suburbs of Melbourne. The day was organised to coincide with an exhibition of work by female RMIT students and was well attended. An evaluation of the day showed that 60 per cent of those attending said they knew virtually nothing about TAFE programs before the day and one third said they would now consider applying for a TAFE program. An 'adopt a school' approach between departments at RMIT and secondary schools was one idea put forward for the future. Targeted programs such as a Certificate of Occupational Studies (COS) program for women in electronics was a popular program for unemployed women. NTS money was used to pay for advertisements to attract women to the program and a part-time administration assistant. Women from the Certificate of Occupational Studies (COS)

course were able to articulate into the Certificate of Basic Electronics and some will go on to the advanced certificate. The emphasis of the Certificate of Occupational Studies (COS) course is on developing social skills and confidence as well as the specific electronics skills and this development of confidence was seen as essential for women entering non-traditional areas.

Some money from the NTS allocation was spent on providing buddy tutoring services whereby a student from a more advanced year would tutor a student with disabilities, either by helping within the actual class or at some mutually agreed time. The Myotherapy Department at the college had a history of attracting visually-impaired students. An area of work which involves tactile skills, visually-impaired students, who often have heightened awareness in their other senses, are well suited for myotherapy. One individual student had entered the department in the early 1980s, gone on to graduate and set up his own business. This ex-student was now a member of the industry advisory committee to the course and was a referral point for other visually-impaired prospective students in the community. Of the 40 students undertaking the course during 1993, four students were visually impaired. The staff in the department had been forced to confront their own beliefs about students with this disability and had discovered that individual students had different needs. Some would read braille and require notes to be translated, others required audio tapes or large print handouts. It was a very resource intensive group to try to target and staff felt overworked. Initially staff had been reluctant but when an individual student was admitted to their class the staff member would usually go out of his or her way to provide extra help. There was criticism that such teachers gained little recognition for the extra hours of work they put into helping such students, or indeed helping other students in the class who sometimes felt that they required extra assistance. The myotherapy course is not conducted at any other TAFE college.

The role of the OTFE

Members of the NTS Working Party believed that the new 1993 guidelines, coupled with the extensive negotiations that had taken place between members of the working party and heads of schools would mean that in future the figures produced would have more meaning. However there was still considerable criticism of the OTFE in requiring only statistical reporting which was not audited. Those at RMIT felt that they were now going through a process which would give them accurate figures, but that they were unlikely to get any more recognition for that than colleges which continued to produce inaccurate ones. Staff urged that their success stories be told both so that individual students could receive recognition and so that those who had assisted them in accessing college programs were also recognised for their work. Wider definitions of success were also requested. For example, the Certificate of Occupational Studies (COS) Electronics for Women program, in which the students were not eligible to be counted through the NTS, could then be

acknowledged as the most successful strategy in enabling women students to access the electronics area.

Future directions

Staff expressed optimism about the new process of negotiation which had taken place to arrive at 1994 figures and felt that it resulted in a broader commitment and understanding of the NTS. Staff had been directly involved in negotiating the number and type of target group for the programs they taught. The changing student profile over the last several years, particularly in relation to students from non-English-speaking backgrounds has made some staff in the college aware of the difference between the student profile and the staffing profile. It has been accepted for some time that female teachers are an important aspect of attracting women to non-traditional areas of study. However, the relative importance of teachers from particular ethnic groups has not been examined as an issue in attracting or retaining students from non-English-speaking backgrounds.

Summary and case study conclusions

Many individuals in the case study colleges complained that the success or otherwise of the NTS was judged on the numbers of places targeted and the number of targeted places filled rather than on more qualitative measures of success. Apart from questioning the focus on quantitative measures they also questioned the accuracy of the statistical base.

In order to keep accurate statistics several factors are necessary.

There must be a commonly understood definition of membership of each of the targeted groups.

There must be a way of recording membership of the targeted groups on application and enrolment forms.

There must be a consistent way of counting individuals who belong to more than one of the targeted groups, for instance an individual with a disability who is also long-term unemployed.

There must be a way of counting individuals who belong to targeted groups but do not occupy targeted places and separating them from those who have taken up a targeted place.

The relative autonomy of Victorian TAFE colleges means that different enrolment forms are used in each college and different information about students is collected. In many cases, within a college, departments will use different application forms for each course and thus request different information from potential students.

Another criticism of the reporting requirements of the NTS in relation to the OTFE was that it was understood to apply only to full-time programs, when particularly for some target groups, such as women and sole supporting parents, this may not be appropriate. Several interviewees commented that the very support mechanisms these groups required included flexible timetabling and the opportunity to study part-time. They argued that a better measure of the amount of access provided might be the different modes of delivery offered by programs within the college. College staff speak of 'NTS students' meaning students who can be identified as belonging to one of the target groups, regardless of whether they occupy a targeted place. For instance, students undertaking the new statewide accredited Certificate of Work Education course, designed as a pre-employment program catering for people with a disability, or a history of learning difficulties, were often referred to as examples of the increasing numbers of students with disabilities obvious on campus.

However, the definition of 'targeted place' for the purposes of the NTS would mean that these individuals could not be counted as occupying a targeted place as they are students in a different targeted program. It was a common complaint of college-based staff that these people were not to be counted, nor were Koorie students in targeted programs for Koories, even though the programs were fully accredited. Many people interviewed in the case study visits rejected the assumption that as seven groups were listed as disadvantaged by the OTFE, they should all be targeted equally according to the provided definitions. Those interviewed in colleges often questioned the category of *Long-term Unemployed* and in practice chose to target the more widely defined group of *Unemployed*.

Further criticism included the fact that reporting by the OTFE was only required quantitatively. Nobody interviewed at any of the colleges was prepared to argue that the achieved figures recorded for their college were accurate according to the 1993 guidelines definitions. Many people, particularly classroom teachers, emphasised that success stories should be acknowledged and that reports to the OTFE should include case studies of students from disadvantaged groups. An annual publication or press release emphasising these successes could do more in terms of encouraging people requiring support to apply to TAFE programs.

Tracking the resources required by NTS students is difficult because the support structures set up in the colleges were not only for students occupying NTS targeted places but for anyone requiring that support, such as counselling or language support.

In none of the colleges studied was it possible to identify students who were occupying NTS targeted places as distinct from those of the same target group who had been admitted through standard selection mechanisms. No documentation was kept by colleges which linked names of students to targeted places. Heads of departments or

selection officers could name individual students but were usually committed to those students remaining anonymous. The students themselves very rarely knew that they occupied a targeted place and other students in the group were unaware of any different selection mechanisms which may have applied.

Most college personnel involved with management of the NTS expressed concerns that it was usually much harder to get NTS places reserved in courses with extremely high demand. This tended to lead to NTS students being valued as less worthy of a place than other students. The implications of this are that access is restricted.

Selection approaches to filling NTS places differed enormously between colleges and in most cases between courses within colleges. Many course co-ordinators and selection officers had not seen the 1993 guidelines, although all managers of NTS in colleges visited had received copies.

The opportunity cost of including students with high support needs was not calculated by any of the colleges visited, although it was suggested that the disability funding introduced in 1994 may encourage this approach. This is because for the first time colleges would be able to submit to the OTFE for extra funds to help provide specified support for individual students on a needs basis. Thus there would be a record of funds given for places provided and the actual cost of providing the support necessary for that particular student.

Completion data was unavailable for NTS students as distinct from any other students. In some colleges completion data in itself is unavailable although the situation was expected to improve during 1994 due to changing reporting requirements of the OTFE. Problems of identifying NTS students after they have entered programs would also arise here.

Administrative and policy changes which would affect students and prospective students for 1994 include the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre system and the proposed increases to fees and charges. As all full time applications for associate diploma courses were processed through the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre for the 1994 intake, college selection officers were relying on information provided by the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre for selection decisions to be made. As the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre uses a single application form whether students are applying for university courses, TAFE college courses or a combination of both, not all NTS categories were listed on the form. This made selection processes more difficult in some circumstances. Recommendations have been made to the Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre to improve the process for 1995.

Changes in the fees charged for students and the fact that all students were expected to pay part of their fees rather than particular groups

gaining a full exemption as had happened in the past, caused many staff interviewed to expect a decrease in applications and/or acceptances from students from most NTS groups for 1994.

NTS funds allocated to individual colleges were being spent in a variety of ways ranging from 'we put it into consolidated revenue' to a specific budget controlled by an equity manager with priorities and costings set by a NTS committee in the college. In one college studied, the removal of NTS funding would mean the termination of the employment of a disability liaison officer, whose position is funded through NTS. In most colleges visited, money other than that provided by NTS funds, was being spent on services for NTS students although as mentioned earlier these students were not separately identified.

Of all the targeted groups discussed in the case studies, students with disabilities and Koorie students attracted the most discussion. Students with physical and intellectual disabilities were seen by college personnel as being the group whose participation had increased most significantly as a result of the NTS. Statistical evidence to back up this perception is difficult because of definitional problems, but overall numbers of students with disabilities targeted and achieved has increased significantly over the last three years. Discussion about such students often centred around the extra resources required to integrate someone with advisability into a mainstream vocational program. This could involve the provision of note takers for hearing-impaired students, aids for visually impaired students, or making adjustments to classrooms, computers or other equipment for a person in a wheelchair.

Koorie students made up the group most often mentioned as 'hard to target'. The provision of separate funding for Koorie liaison officers and Koorie programs was seen by many staff interviewed as positive in that it encouraged access, but better relationships between targeted Koorie programs and other vocational programs, enabling Koorie students to enter through the NTS are required. The Victorian Aboriginal Education Association Incorporated, in its Koorie Training Plan 1995-97, after listing Koorie enrolments for 1992 TAFE programs, criticises the OTFE for not publishing an annual report or a statistical analysis of the NTS since 1990.

College staff felt that any removal or reduction of funding for NTS programs would affect the ability of the colleges to provide access. Over time the way in which resources are allocated has evolved to suit the needs of particular colleges and in many cases it was easy to identify what specific support functions would disappear if tagged funding was removed.

College personnel also complained that the overall college funding formula of the OTFE in focussing so strongly on student contact hours meant that there was a financial penalty for colleges offering

small classes or one to one help for students who required extra assistance. The support program for students with learning difficulties at the Gordon is one notable case of this.

Almost all staff interviewed believed that although there were problems with the NTS, particularly in terms of identifying students occupying targeted places, it should continue to exist as a requirement placed on colleges. It was generally felt that cultural change had occurred with individuals citing heads of department who were originally opposed to the idea but were now advertising their 'NTS successes' and that the NTS gave a focal point for debate about access and equity issues in colleges. Apart from one college, content to rely on a reputation for quality of service to its own clients, all other colleges had staff who seemed to want recognition from the OTFE and other colleges for their successes.

3 Other equity strategies

NTS and other equity strategies

The negotiated targets strategy does not stand alone in Victoria, where it was developed. To evaluate the proposal that the principles of the NTS be extended nationally, it is necessary to consider whether the strategy could 'fit', and add value, in the policy context in other States and Territories, with particular reference to equity policies.

Other national equity strategies

Vocational education and training in all States and Territories operates within a policy context that is shaped by national policies for vocational education and training, including equity policies. The Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) has previously funded a variety of labour market, education and training programs which impinge upon State and Territory TAFE institutes and colleges and other vocational education and training providers.

Since it became formally operational on 1 January 1994, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) is playing an increasingly important role in shaping vocational education and training in Australia. In particular, ANTA has taken over from DEET responsibility for co-ordinating program funding for TAFE institutes and colleges and other vocational education and training providers, and for the national network of industry training advisory bodies. ANTA has developed a set of national priorities for the national vocational education and training system, which recognise the importance of equity and fair participation and introduce some elements of a targeting strategy to national funding (ANTA, 1993).

Despite the formation of ANTA, DEET retains responsibility for federal funding of labour market and other education and training programs, involving substantial participation by State and Territory TAFE institutes and colleges and other vocational education and training providers, commonly through tendering arrangements for the competitive provision of services.

DEET and the Commonwealth Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs also fund a number of literacy and English language programs in which State and Territory TAFE institutes and colleges

and other vocational education and training providers provide services to migrants.

In the 1992 National Goals for vocational education and training, Ministers for Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET) identified the following target groups: women, people with inadequate English language, literacy and numeracy skills, people with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, unemployed people, and people in rural areas, (MOVEET, 1992). This includes all of the current Victorian NTS categories, except sole supporting parents. The Australian National Training Authority has asked that State and Territory Training Profiles address the priorities of these target groups, and the national strategy for vocational education and training emphasises the importance of increased participation by disadvantaged groups in monitoring of the performance of providers.

Equity strategies in other States and Territories

New South Wales

In August 1994 the NSW government published 'Achievement for everyone—a strategy for equity in education and training in NSW', covering participation in schools, TAFE and private providers of vocational education and training. The NSW equity strategy does not suggest that targeted programs be ended, but it claims a difference of focus from 'traditional' targeted programs for defined 'disadvantaged' groups, in favour of equity being 'a central concern for all those involved in education and training', and a comprehensive focus on 'the needs of learners who require special assistance'. Private schools and VET providers were 'invited to collaborate' in the strategy. (Chadwick, Chikarovski, 1994).

Specific 'plans of action' with 'specific strategies, targets and performance outcomes' are being developed within the NSW government's policy framework by all government bodies involved with any education and training delivery (ibid). The policy framework outlines the fundamental principles, and the 'plans of action' provide the means of implementation. This provides a clear policy framework but not the strategic approach to implementation that the NTS provides in Victoria.

The *NSW State Training Profile* provides details on State priorities for disadvantaged clients, including non-English-speaking people, people with disabilities, the unemployed, Aboriginals, women, people with literacy difficulties, prisoners, and people living in remote areas (*NSW State Training Profiles 1994*, pp. 12, 15-16, 22-23, 26, 34-35).

The NSW *State Plan of Action for Women in* TAFE illustrates how each of the 'plans for action' for people with special needs that are being developed within the framework of the NSW equity strategy (South Western Sydney Institute of TAFE, 1994).

Queensland

Queensland has developed a State policy and implementation strategy for social justice in that state's vocational education and training system, based on extensive consultation around a draft discussion paper (VETEC, March 1993; October 1993). The policy aims to 'maximise access, participation and outcomes for potential and existing participants from the target groups'. The target groups include: Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders; people with disabilities; women; geographically isolated persons; people from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB); the long-term unemployed; the educationally marginalised; people in custody or detention centres; and older people. This is more inclusive than the Victorian NTS categories. The objectives of the policy include increasing participation by under-represented groups 'by setting targets'. In implementation, training providers, policy makers and program managers are urged to take the social justice policy into consideration in making their own plans, with the understanding that, in monitoring the performance of the system, VETEC will expect 'evidence of the inclusion of *target groups*' VETEC, October 1993).

Queensland also has an equal employment opportunity program for staff in the vocational education and training system (DEVETIR, 1993).

VETEC noted that 'negotiated participation/outcome targets' are a priority of the disadvantaged groups of clients in Queensland, along with improvements in promotion, curricula, articulation, negotiation, support services, professional development, work placement advice, cost-related funding formulas and co-ordination of funding arrangements (VETEC, October 1994, p. 29).

While Queensland has a more inclusive list of target groups than the Victorian NTS, to date VETEC has not developed implementation mechanisms as specific as those applied by the State Training Board of Victoria to Victorian TAFE colleges under the NTS. However, VETEC is co-ordinating action to implement Queensland's social justice policy in relation to each of its target groups.

For women, Queensland is improving promotion and marketing, access to trade training, pre-employment training for unemployed women, child-care services, and professional development of teachers. For the unemployed, Queensland is liaising with the federal Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) to improve articulation and recognition of 'labour market' training programs for the unemployed within mainstream vocational education, training and employment. Queensland is also

implementing an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Vocation Education, Training and Employment Plan including more places in proven programs from State growth funds, new strategic initiatives to meet needs identified in consultations from federal Aboriginal Education Policy funds, and more ATSI involvement in decision making. An upgraded learning centre for ATSI students at Cairns College of TAFE has been a priority capital development project. Queensland is benchmarking the needs of people with disabilities for facilities and services, and related staff development needs, to establish the resource implications of putting into effect the Queensland implementation plan for the national strategy on *flexAbility*. The vocational education and training needs of people in isolated areas, people of non-English-speaking background or literacy difficulties and people at correctional institutions are being researched, and action plans to meet their priority needs are also being prepared. Queensland already co-ordinates provision of substantial English as a second language (ESL), and workplace, community, private provider and TAFE literacy courses, with State and federal funding (VETEC, September 1993, pp. 26, 31-32; VETEC, October 1994, pp. 21-24, 37, 73-74).

Western Australia

Western Australia's vocational education and training system supports the national priorities outlined by the Australian National Training Authority (*1994 State Training Profile: Western Australia*, p. 7). In particular, Western Australia supports 'strategies to improve access to training by removing structural and other barriers' to secure equity and access. Western Australia is examining options for improving equity and access in vocational education and training, (*1995 State Training Profile: Western Australia*, p. 26).

For women, Western Australia is developing strategies to achieve outcomes consistent with the National Plan of Action for Women in TAFE. This will include specific strategies on recognition of prior learning, under-representation of women in some industries, implementation of *Women in Entry-level Training* report, and increased training provision in feminised occupations (*1995 State Training Profile: Western Australia*, p. 27).

For people with disabilities, including 14 per cent of the Western Australian population, Western Australia has developed strategies consistent with *FlexAbility: A strategic framework for people with disabilities in TAFE 1994-1996*, including: increased participation in mainstream entry-level programs, professional development of TAFE staff, and improved management information on delivery, and support for, TAFE students with disabilities (*1995 State Training Profile: Western Australia*, p. 27).

For the 13 per cent of Western Australians with low English language or literacy levels, Western Australia has substantial programs that are

assisted by the Australian Language and Literacy Policy. These include development of a competency-based curriculum in literacy and numeracy, provision of Workplace, Community and Special Intervention Literacy programs, with incentives to providers for innovative and 'best practice', and a study of barriers to 'life-long learning' access to vocational education and training by disadvantaged people (1994 *State Training Profile: Western Australia*, pp. 42-44).

For the 11 per cent of the people of WA who are from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB), the State government's priorities are: flexible provision of vocational and bridging courses in English as a second language (ESL) courses, integrated cross-cultural awareness training, improved dissemination of information on training and better access to recognition arrangements, (1995 *State Training Profile: Western Australia*, p. 28).

For the 3 per cent of Western Australians who are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders, Western Australia has developed priorities based on a State Task Force on Aboriginal Social Justice, including strategies on: better training resources for Aboriginal entrepreneurs and managers, culturally sensitive flexible delivery arrangements for Aborigines in remote areas, co-operation through the Western Australian Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority with the federal Department of Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and the national Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) in a Joint Projects Working Party providing training targeted to Aboriginal people and encouragement to private providers of culturally relevant training for Aboriginal people (*1995 State Training Profile: Western Australia*, pp. 27-28).

South Australia

South Australia has well developed policies for equal employment opportunity for TAFE staff (Potter et al, 1994; Potter 1994; Markotic and Potter, 1994) and for access and equity in vocational education and training. For women, South Australia is committed to implementing the National Plan of Action for Women in TAFE (DETAFE, May 1992), including identification of numbers of targeted places for women in the new Australia Vocational Education and Training System by the South Australian Vocational Education Employment and Training (VEET) Board. Access to training for women, especially older women and women from non-English-speaking backgrounds is to be improved. In addition to co-ordinating provision within the State of Commonwealth-funded English as a second language (ESL) programs for recent migrants, South Australia is developing a State-funded ESL programs for long-term residents from non-English-speaking backgrounds, who are excluded from Commonwealth programs. SA is also providing

substantial literacy programs through TAFE and community education providers.

South Australia is developing joint, matched-funding initiatives with the Commonwealth for people with disabilities, to equip them for employment. Special access, support services and flexible delivery arrangements are being developed for Aboriginal people in vocational education and training, including co-operation with WA and NT in training for people in remote areas. The overall patterns of participation and training needs of target groups are being researched by industry and occupation, with special reference to people with multiple disadvantages. These programs and developments are broadly consistent with the priorities of the target groups in South Australia (DETAFE, September 1993, pp 6, 22, 26, 32, 34-35; VEET Board, September 1994, pp. 6-7, 9).

A novel South Australian practice is the inclusion of a 'Social Justice Profile—TAFE provision' in the annual SA *State Training Profile*. This provides data on TAFE enrolments by NESB, disabled, Aboriginal and female students at preparatory, operative, trades and skilled or professional/para-professional levels in each of the twelve TAFE statistical standard fields of study (DETAFE, September 1993, Table 6.9; VEET Board, September 1994, Table 14).

This reporting practice is a good model for the overall level of participation by target groups at the State level, and disaggregation at the institute or college level could be feasible. The absence of such overall participation data to complement reporting of specific targeted places is, as we have seen, a problem in relation to the Victorian NTS.

Tasmania

Tasmanian TAFE does not have a program of explicit target setting for disadvantaged groups like the Negotiated Targets Strategy in Victoria, except for Tasmanian Aborigines. Tasmanian TAFE does, however, have active strategies to assist women, Aborigines and people with physical disabilities, or a non-English-speaking background, or compensatory education needs.

For women, Tasmanian TAFE has adopted the National Plan of Action for Women in TAFE as a basis for developing appropriate equity strategies through a Women in TAFE Advisory Committee. Tasmanian TAFE uses Women's Transitional Studies, Women at Work courses and Tradeswomen on the Move to promote participation by women.

The Tasmanian State *Training profile 1993* identified as delivery strategies more bridging courses for women in predominantly male areas, and more women's studies, computing, small business, public sector management and laboratory technology courses for women.

Courses for women in the automotive and building trades have been planned for 1994.

These delivery strategies are supported by staff development programs on sexual harassment and gender inclusive teaching, with special courses for female staff on applying for decision-making positions. Each TAFE institute has women training consultants to support women students. Statistical analyses of participation, completions and outcomes for male and female students in TAFE courses are being undertaken in 1994.

For Aborigines, Tasmanian TAFE supports eleven of the twenty-one goals for the national ATSI education policy in relation to ensuring Aboriginal involvement in decision-making, equal access to and participation in educational services, fair educational outcomes and education of all Australian students about traditional and contemporary Aboriginal culture. The Tasmanian Department of Industrial Relations , Vocational Education and Training (DIRVET) participates in a cross-sectoral Strategic Reference Group including public and private schools, TAFE, higher education and Aboriginal education bodies. The Strategic Reference Group promotes effective consultation and monitors programs on the implementation of Tasmania's strategic plan. DIRVET is consulting with Aborigines about education and training, recruiting and developing Aboriginal staff and developing Aboriginal awareness in non-Aboriginal DIRVET staff. To promote the longer-term goals of equal opportunities and fair outcomes, DIRVET is providing compensatory education, bridging courses and support arrangements to promote and sustain Aboriginal participation, including Aboriginal Access courses in all regions and special Women's Studies courses for Aboriginal women. DEIRT is also specifying *'percentage enrolments for Aboriginal people in all accredited and award training courses highlighting those courses which respond to Aboriginal community-based employment and training needs'* (DIRVET, 1994).

For people with physical disabilities, Tasmania provides brochures providing contact details for student services in TAFE institutes and other post-compulsory education and training bodies. The brochures note that most institutions welcome and provide support to students with disabilities, but warning that *'the level of support . . . varies from institution to institution'*. Tasmanian TAFE has appointed half-time disability support officers in all TAFE institutes to assist students with disabilities. To assist people with disabilities, DIRVET is also providing courses for providers of human services (such as tourism) on serving the special needs of people with disabilities.

For people with a non-English-speaking background (NESB) who lack proficiency in English, Tasmanian TAFE provides federally-funded English language training to NESB migrant job seekers who meet Department of Employment, Education and

Training criteria and other NESB migrants whose time in Australia and assessed language proficiency meet Department of Immigration and Ethnic Affairs criteria. Courses based on the New South Wales Certificate in spoken and written English are provided by the Adult Migrant English Service in Tasmania's four largest cities, supplemented by a distance learning *It's over to you* program for NESB migrants in isolated areas and a Tutor Support Scheme for women NESB migrants. The Tasmanian State *Training Profile 1993* indicates that the Adult Migrant English Service in Tasmania is adding further services for NESB migrants who do not meet the federal-funding criteria, but need English language training.

For people with compensatory education needs, Tasmanian TAFE is providing a comprehensive range of literacy and basic education programs, and developing pathways from these programs into other education and training services.

Australian Capital Territory

The Australian Capital Territory *1994 Training Profile* states that development of the Territory's vocational education and training system is guided by seven principles, including *'applying social justice principles to ensure access and equity to vocational education and training for all those eligible to participate'* (ACT *1994 Training Profile*, p.15). The ACT notes that this is consistent with the Australian National Training Authority's *Priorities for 1994* (ibid, p. 16).

TAFE in the Australian Capital Territory has been consolidated into the Canberra Institute of Technology, which has several campuses. The Canberra Institute of Technology has an Equal Opportunity Advisory Committee and an Equal Opportunity Department within its Student Services Unit. Equal opportunity policy has four *'main target groups'*; women, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, people with disabilities and people from non-English-speaking backgrounds. Equal opportunity policy also provides for people who need compensatory education services. Canberra Institute of Technology is *'investigating the feasibility of setting quotas for participation by targeted groups'* (*ACT 1994 Training Profile*, p.19).

For women, the Canberra Institute of Technology participated in the development of the 1991 National plan of action for women in TAFE (NPAWT) prepared an *ACT Implementation Plan 1992-1994* to guide the application of the national plan within the ACT. Canberra Institute of Technology has also contributed to nine NPAWT projects, a TAFE national staff development committee project on gender-inclusive teaching and DEET-funded preparatory courses for women in automotive, electronics and catering trades (*ACT 1994 Training Profile*, p.20).

The *ACT Implementation Plan* for NPAWT has the objectives of increasing participation by women in TAFE decision-making and improving access, participation, the learning environment, support services and training outcomes for women. Canberra Institute of

Technology has identified areas where women are under-represented, provided selection processes, developed courses for women in some of these areas, and is actively promoting opportunities to women. However, the response from women to opportunities to participate in non-traditional areas is sometimes less than expected. Gender-inclusive curricula and harassment policies have been developed and applied through staff development. Physical security and child-care provisions have improved. Counselling and support services for women are provided. Women staff have been encouraged to participate in staff development and to seek promotion to management positions (*ACT Implementation Plan, 1992-1994*; CIT, *EEO Program, January 1993–December 1994*, pp.15-16).

For people with disabilities, the Canberra Institute of Technology participated in the development of the *Flexibility* National Plan of Outcomes for people with disabilities in vocational education and training and the *ACT Access and Equity Plan for 1991-1994*. The Canberra Institute of Technology is also developing a specific ACT implementation plan for *Flexibility*. Careers Education and Information Services offices advise people with disabilities of equal opportunity and counselling support services who can give them help from preparing enrolments, but only about one-quarter of people with disabilities accept the assistance offered. The Outreach Department within the CIT School of General Studies endeavours to assist people with physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological or psychiatric disabilities to prepare themselves for, and to participate in, mainstream courses provided by CIT. Participation by students with disabilities in CIT courses has been increasing rapidly (*ACT 1994 Training Profile*, pp.20-21). CIT's equal employment opportunity program includes provisions for people with disabilities, Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders and people of non-English-speaking background (*CIT, EEO Program, January 1993 - December 1994*, pp.17-21).

For Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students, the Canberra Institute of Technology provides a suite of supportive programs, which have succeeded to the extent that the proportion of the ACT Aboriginal population participating in TAFE courses is slightly higher than overall participation by the total ACT population. In 1993, there were 54 full-time and 8 part-time ATSI students in mainstream courses and 26 ATSI students in literacy and numeracy courses.

Yaruana Centre was established for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students at Canberra Institute of Technology in 1990, funded by DEET's Aboriginal Education Strategies Institution Program (AESIP).

Yaruana Centre provides assistance to ATSI students in obtaining tutorial support, accommodation, applications for scholarships, and

counselling. Yaruana Centre has arranged several access courses and negotiated designated places in mainstream courses for ATSI students, the closest ACT analogy to the Victorian negotiated targets strategy (*ACT 1994 Training Profile*, pp.21-22).

The Canberra Institute of Technology assists students from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) to participate in mainstream vocational courses through team teaching. An English as a second language (ESL) teacher assists a subject matter teacher to communicate effectively with NESB students. CIT also provides a range of English language training programs funded by the federal departments responsible for Employment, Education and Training (DEET) and Immigration and Ethnic Affairs (DIEA) (*ACT 1994 Training Profile*, p 22).

For people requiring compensatory education, the Canberra Institute of Technology has developed special literacy programs for the unemployed which are provided free. Pre-vocational courses in basic skills and bridging/preparatory programs to enable students to participate in mainstream courses are also being developed and provided. Community-based providers in the ACT complement the CIT's courses, by providing literacy and numeracy courses for groups with special needs. (*ACT 1994 Training Profile*, pp.22,35).

In short, the Australian Capital Territory has a well developed suite of supportive policies and programs for disadvantaged clients at the Canberra Institute of Technology, (documented in The *Canberra Institute of Technology Social Justice Budget, 1994-95*) but as of August 1994 the Territory has not adopted a policy of developing participation targets for disadvantaged clients, except ATSI students.

Northern Territory

The Northern Territory Employment and Training Authority (NTETA) was established on 1 January 1992, with an advisory council structure that includes specialist advisory bodies for women and Aborigines. The Aboriginal Programs Employment and Training Advisory Council (APETAC) advises NTETA on all aspects of provisions for Aborigines, and a Women's Needs Advisory Committee is a specialist sub-group of NTETA's Employment and Training Needs Advisory Council (*NT Training Profile, 1994*, pp.5-6).

Provision for women is being defined by the Women's Needs Advisory Committee. For women and disadvantaged groups, NTETA's recognition functions embody National Framework for Recognition of Training equity principles, and the accreditation principles formulated by the Australian Committee for Training and Curriculum, which include promoting access and participation. The NTETA's Planning and Resourcing Advisory Council also observes Australian National Training Authority guidelines, which include planning and reporting on equity issues. The five TAFE institutions in

the Northern Territory have also developed local provider equity strategies. (NTETA Letter to NCVER, 12 May 1994).

Provisions for people with disabilities and people of non-English-speaking background include most of the measures described for women. There is a high demand for English as a second language and English literacy instruction in the Northern Territory's vocational education and training services. Almost a quarter of the Northern Territory's population are Aboriginal, and there is a substantial proportion of other people of non-English-speaking background, notably people from South East Asia, in Darwin.

Provision for Aborigines is probably the most fully articulated area of equity policy in vocational education and training in the Northern Territory. Many of the Aboriginal quarter of the Northern Territory population have an Aboriginal first language, and some are non-English-speaking. The highly dispersed population makes provision of services very difficult (*NT Training Profile, 1994*, pp.15,19,34-35).

As well as bodies like the Northern Territory University's Institute of TAFE in Darwin, the Centralian College in Alice Springs, the NT Open College and the NT Rural College, which serve Aboriginals and other people, the Northern Territory has Batchelor College which provides higher education and TAFE courses in the body with a strong Aboriginal ethos. About 94 per cent of the students at Batchelor College are Aborigines from remote rural areas (*NT Training Profile 1994*, pp.21-25,44,52-53).

Adult literacy programs for Aborigines in rural communities is also a major focus of compensatory education provision in the Northern Territory (*NT Training Profile, 1994*, p.54).

Adding a national NTS?

This brief survey of equity policies in States and Territories other than Victoria indicates that the NTS would add specific targeting for most, if not all, NTS groups in most jurisdictions. Apart from Victoria targeting for participation by disadvantaged groups has not been general practice, except for Queensland's in principle policy, ATSI students in the ACT and Tasmania, and places for women in the AVTS in South Australia.

The issues posed by the national extension of the principles of the NTS are considered in the next section. ANTA seems to be moving in that broad direction, but rather tentatively. The development of new data standards and a national management information system for vocational education and training would provide valuable infrastructure support. The shortcomings as well as the benefits of the NTS need to be considered in relation to proposals for a national

system. Overlaying all is the Australian federal system and an Australian tendency to be more willing to follow leads from other countries than other States. Whether national extension of the principles of the NTS is feasible and appropriate is a matter that needs to be considered.

4 Conclusions: A national fair participation strategy

The NTS in Victoria

The negotiated targets strategy (NTS) in Victoria has operated as a part of a suite of equity strategies.

The NTS has operated quite successfully as a cost-effective means of increasing access for disadvantaged clients. Despite the patchy quality of the data on the NTS, the overall pattern is clearly one of success in the principal purpose of the strategy.

This success is further supported by the case studies reported here, and by other evaluations of the NTS. The strategy has provided a consistent approach, and raised awareness of the importance of equity considerations among TAFE staff in Victoria. Arguably, explicitly promoted equity strategies in several other States and Territories would also have had similar educational effects within those jurisdictions.

More importantly, the NTS has provided a flawed but useful basis for general reporting of programs against locally determined equity targets across the Victorian TAFE system. The lack of completion data related to disadvantaged categories has been a significant flaw which is being rectified. Inconsistent practice about overall participation by NTS categories and specific increases in places related to NTS targets set has been a significant flaw in implementation, despite the efforts of administrators of the strategy to correct it. The 'managing diversity' project may achieve consistency, based on separate reporting of both overall participation and target-related increases.

Quite apart from consistency, it is desirable that an equity strategy and related reporting should encourage both greater overall participation by NTS groups and specific target-related increases.

A focus on overall participation alone may allow satisfactory general trends to justify reduced effort on behalf of specific groups for whom targeted places should be provided. A focus on targeted places alone may not give due recognition to other factors contributing to good general trends. Both patterns seem to have been present in some Victorian colleges in relation to the NTS.

The targets set are locally determined, within a policy set by the State Training Board. Perhaps the most unfortunate aspect of the operation of the NTS is that Aborigines and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people, and 'institutionalised' people when they were included, were usually accorded less favourable consideration in the setting of targets and in outcomes achieved.

This compares unfavourably with Canberra Institute of Technology, where participation by ATSI people is proportionately greater than the ATSI share of the ACT population. ATSI people were the only group for whom Canberra Institute of Technology has set equity participation targets in the past.

The tendency to neglect the most disadvantaged groups in the setting of targets is perhaps the most substantial ethical criticism of the operation of the NTS in Victoria. It probably requires stronger policy guidance on the desirability of setting local targets for all categories of disadvantaged clients, consistent with the presence of such clients within the catchment area of the college or other training provider.

NTS, AVETMISS and disadvantaged clients

The development of the Australian Vocational Education and Training Management Information Statistical Standards (AVETMISS) as the basis for a new Australian management information system for vocational education and training (NATMISS) is very relevant to the possible national extension of the Victorian negotiated targets strategy. AVETMISS is proposing nationally consistent data standards, population definitions and data collection procedures that will address many of the shortcomings of the NTS data collection.

The classifications and data specifications developed for AVETMISS define outcomes by module, covering recognition of prior learning, credit transfer, pass, fail, no result, course completed, course not yet completed, and withdrawal (by transfer, with or without failure). Lack of completions data is a problem in NTS statistics, and the operation of the NTS. Furthermore, AVETMISS has detailed classifications and data specifications for clients with disabilities (by type, duration and need for assistance), employment or unemployment category, language spoken at home (including need for assistance with English), location (by postcode/residential collection district of normal residence), gender and Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander self-identification. (AVETMISS, November 1993, Vols 3 and 4.)

These classifications and data specifications cover all of the disadvantaged client categories now covered by the negotiated targets strategy, with one exception. Women, Aborigines and Torres

Strait Islanders, people with disabilities, the long-term unemployed, people from isolated rural backgrounds and people with non-English-speaking backgrounds are included, with precise nationally consistent coverage.

The one exception is sole supporting parents. Despite representations from the former Vocational Education, Employment and Training Advisory Committee (VEETAC) Women's Standing Committee in favour of including a classification and data specification for sole supporting parents, the AVETMISS authorities decided that to do so would intrude on personal privacy. This reasoning is flawed. Other items on disadvantaged clients are included on a 'voluntary self-disclosure' basis, which is entirely consistent with normally accepted definitions of privacy in terms of 'voluntary self-disclosure within bounds' (ref 1).

Privacy is protected if those providing information do so on the basis of 'voluntary self-disclosure'. Data items on sole-supporting parent status and need for assistance included on a 'voluntary self-disclosure' basis, like the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander question, would not compromise privacy, but would facilitate the provision of assistance where it is needed and sought. The Vocational Education, Employment and Training (VEET) Women's Taskforce (which has replaced the VEETAC Women's Standing Committee) may raise this matter for further consideration by AVETMISS authorities. Inclusion of sole-supporting parent data items would ensure that this category of disadvantaged clients would not be left behind if a negotiated targets strategy is applied nationally.

National application of NTS?

It has already been mentioned that in 1992 the Ministers for Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET) identified as target groups all of the current Victorian NTS categories, except sole supporting parents (MOVEET, 1992). The Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) has asked that State and Territory Training Profiles address the priorities of these target groups, and the ANTA 1994 national strategy for vocational education and training emphasises the importance of increased participation by disadvantaged groups in monitoring of the performance of TAFE and private providers.

Applying the Ministerial decision on target groups, the ANTA strategy identifies as target or under-represented groups: women, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people without adequate social, literacy and numeracy skills, people with disabilities, rural and isolated people, unemployed people and people with non-

English-speaking backgrounds. The ANTA strategy states that providers must recognise and accommodate the diversity of the clients of the system and notes that 'public funds will be allocated to programs partly on their demonstrated ability to meet the needs of the target groups', with a comprehensive review at the end of the 1995-1997 triennium of progress 'in improving opportunities and outcomes for people in the target groups' (ANTA 1994).

The development of reporting arrangements for disadvantaged clients on a nationally consistent basis under AVETMISS will convert a major difficulty for national application of an NTS—like strategy into an emerging opportunity. Without AVETMISS, any attempt at a nationally consistent application of an equity strategy like the Negotiated Targets Strategy in the manner proposed in the Employment and Skill Formation Council's report on *The Australian Vocational Certificate Training System* (ESFC, March 1992), would have foundered in a morass of inconsistent State and Territory reporting arrangements. With AVETMISS, a necessary part of a nationally consistent strategy for reporting progress against locally determined equity targets is becoming available over the next few years.

The question is whether the Ministerial Council for Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) or the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA) Ministerial Council, should consider adopting such a strategy. The ANTA Ministerial Council would seem to be the appropriate body. The strategy would then be implemented by ANTA and State and Territory TAFE and training authorities. A nationally consistent equity strategy would be consistent with pronouncements by the ANTA Ministerial Council and its predecessor, the Ministers of Vocational Education, Employment and Training (MOVEET), about co-operating in a national training system, and about the importance of equity in vocational education and training, and about the importance of target groups similar to the NTS categories.

If the ANTA Ministerial Council supported the general concept of nationally consistent reporting of outcomes related to locally determined targets for equity participation, in the manner of the NTS, the ANTA Ministerial Council could adopt the concept as a national fair participation strategy. The key elements of fair participation a strategy might be:

- the ANTA Ministerial Council would confirm the principle of fair participation in vocational education and training, and authorise ANTA to institute a national fair participation strategy;
- ANTA could implement the fair participation strategy by arranging for the TAFE authority in each State and Territory to request TAFE institutes or colleges within the State or Territory to set targets for increased participation by *each and all* of the designated classes of disadvantaged clients;

- data on the overall level of participation and outcomes attained by the designated classes of disadvantaged clients in each college or institute will in due course become available from AVETMISS/ NATMISS and target setting should be seen as clearly additional to this overall participation trend data;
- TAFE institutes and colleges in each State and Territory could propose equity strategies to support successful participation by disadvantaged clients to State and Territory TAFE authorities and ANTA;
- a small fund could be established (probably by federal provision) to selectively assist equity support strategies proposed by TAFE institutes and colleges (a fund of $3.5 million for national distribution would be approximately consistent with the scale of State Training Board funding of Victorian TAFE colleges under the NTS);
- all TAFE institutes and colleges could be asked to report through NATMISS on additional places attained against both targets set and overall participation by disadvantaged clients so that in due course data on outcomes achieved by disadvantaged clients could be added, for both those who gained places through the targets and others in the disadvantaged category within the institute or college;
- clear policy guidelines should be given in relation to reporting places attained by individuals who belong to several target groups;
- if experience with TAFE colleges proved worthwhile, extension to other providers of vocational education and training could be considered by the ANTA Ministerial Council.

Without something like a national fair participation strategy, there is likely to be a deterioration in the fairness of access to, and participation in, vocational education and training as the provision of education and training services becomes subject to more competitive market pressures (Barnett, 1993: Lundberg, 1992, 1994).

A fair participation strategy would effectively build upon the new AVETMISS/NATISS arrangements to apply a (somewhat modified but more consistent) version of the Victorian negotiated targets strategy to all Australian TAFE institutes and colleges, and eventually to all vocational education and training providers. In an increasingly competitive training market, social obligations can not be limited to TAFE but should be applicable to all providers if the 'playing field' is to be truly 'level'. The Victorian 'managing diversity' project envisages the coverage of the negotiated targets strategy being extended to all vocational education providers in Victoria.

The national fair participation strategy suggested here is clearly based on the fundamental principles of the Negotiated Targets Strategy. However, the suggested adaptation would avoid many of the inconsistencies in the application of the strategy in Victoria, including double counting, incomplete coverage of the NTS groups, and confusion between overall participation by NTS groups and

specifically-targeted places for NTS groups. Targets would be set locally and reporting would be to the inter-governmental ANTA Ministerial Council, minimising constitutional complexities. Such a fair participation strategy would promote more equitable outcomes from vocational education and training across Australia.

Attachments

Attachment 1

Staff consulted in case studies:

RMIT

Ian Sapwell	Deputy Director—TAFE
Anne Holland	Manager, Equal Opportunity
Rod Edwards	Head (Acting) Dept of Electronics Trade School of Electrotechnology
Adeline Yeoh	Labour Market Programs Co-ordinator, Office of Deputy Director—TAFE
Herb Drury	HOD Myotherapy
Lisa Groves	Co-ordinator Trade and Technology Day
Derith Morland	Project Officer—Learning Support Pilot Project NTS Funded Project
Jim Burrowes	HOD Welding
Di McLachlan	Disability Liaison Officer, Independent Learning Unit

OUTER EASTERN

Moira Schulze	Deputy Director
Ken Manson	Assistant Director
William Winford	HOC Art & Design
Sharon Rice	HOC Health, Social & Community Studies
Pat Jones	HOC Manufacturing, Electrical & Electronic Technology

EAST GIPPSLAND

Pam Hutchinson	Manager, Planning & Development
John Ireland	Head of Access and Outreach
Anne Kearney	Manager, Student Services
Cathy Brigg	Teacher—General Studies (ACRACS)
Judi Alexander	Teacher—Business Studies
Janine Rooks	Integration Co-ordinator
Tracey Sherrah	Support Worker
Shirley Biggs	Student Counsellor
Phyl Angus	Teacher—Basic Education

Maureen Webb	Outreach Co-ordinator (Swifts Creek)
Georgie Hilder	Outreach Co-ordinator (Buchan)
Wendy Whitford	Outreach Co-ordinator (Orbost)
Wendy Blackburn	Outreach Co-ordinator (Orbost)
Jane Taylor	Outreach Co-ordinator(Maffra/Heyfield)
Mandy Milliner	Outreach Co-ordinator (Cann River)

GORDON

Marianne Renee	Student Counsellor
Deborah Tew	Student Admissions Officer
Lyndsey Roper	Acting EO Manager
John Ruddy	Learning Skills Unit
Ian Daykin	Director
Sheryl Mackie	Women's Access
Richard W. Fry	Koori Liaison Officer
Paul Anderson	HOD Electrical Technology
Rob Inglis	Associate Director, Community Services, Building & Preparatory Studies
Jean Coburn	HOD Applied Languages
John Van Cleef	HOD Applied Science & Mathematics
Graeme Little	Co-ordinator BCE Program Engineering Department
Margaret Tayler	Integration Unit Coordinator
David Turner	HOD Art and Design
Dennis Peacock	HOD Accounting Programs
Judy Hansen	Social & Community Services
Ann Craig	Social & Community Services

HOLMESGLEN

Leonie Millar	Manager, Administration and Educational Services
Michael Keaney	HOD Special Access

BOX HILL

David McNamara	Manager, Organisation Development and Equity
Leanne Wilson	Organisation Development staff member
Saskia Cote	HOD Language and Literacy Studies
John Buultjens	Acting HOD Building Construction
Sandra Peters	Director of Counselling Services

Attachment 2

Definitions of NTS client groups

Women and girls (women)

For the purpose of setting NTP targets, this refers to women and girls enrolling in courses in which females are currently under-represented.

People of non-English-speaking background (NESB)

For the purpose of setting NTP targets, people of non-English-speaking background (NESB) are those who:

- have English language difficulties (i.e. rated as having 'poor' or 'nil' level of proficiency), or
- come from a non-English-speaking culture/background and are assessed as likely to face persistent cultural barriers in gaining access to and participating in a program of study at a TAFE college.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders (ABS)

People of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent who identify themselves as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and who are accepted as such by the community in which they live.

People with disabilities (disab)

People with disabilities (disab) are those who, because of an impairment resulting in loss or reduction of functional capacity, are likely to encounter difficulty in gaining access to and participating effectively in a program of study conducted at a TAFE college. A disability can be physical, sensory, intellectual, psychological or medical in nature.

Sole-supporting parents (SSP)

Sole-supporting parents (SSP) are people who:

- have sole care, custody and control of a child(ren) under sixteen years of age or who attract(s) a dependant allowance;
- have insufficient skills/work experience or whose skills/work experience have become out of date.

Long-term unemployed (LTU)

Long-term unemployed (LTU) refers to those who have been unemployed and seeking work/registered with the CES for a total of at least six (6) months in the last nine (9) months.

Isolated (Isol)

Isolated people are those who, as a result of a particular set of social, cultural or geographical circumstances, experience difficulty in gaining access to and participation in a program of study at a TAFE college. Generally associated with physical proximity and commonly experienced in rural areas, isolation can result from a number of factors including lack of transport, social contact or means of communication.

Institutionalised (Inst)

Institutionalised (Inst) refers to people who:

- have been, or are currently living in an institutionalised setting under government care and protection, or
- have been, or are currently identified as offenders or ex-offenders.

Source: Office of State Training Board, 1990

Attachment 3

Table 1-1: Performance agreement objectives, mid-year review, 1989

College	1 NTP Working Group	2 Identify NTP clients	3 Implement targets in new initiatives	4 Develop NTP Plan in 1990	5 Established recording process	6 NTP staff development	7 NTP in Performance Improvement Plan for senior staff
Ballarat	x	x	x	x			x
Batman	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Box Hill	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Broadmeadows	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Council of Adult Education							
Dandenong							
East Gippsland		x	x	x		x	x
Flagstaff	x						
Footscray	x	x	x	x	x		x
Frankston	x	x	x	x	x		x
Gordon	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Goulburn Valley	x	x	x	x		x	x
Holmesglen	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Loddon-Campaspe	x		x	x	x		x
Melb College of Decoration		x	x	x	x	x	x
Melb College of Printing		x	x	x			
Melb College of Textiles	x	x	x	x			x
Moorabbin	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Newport	x	x	x				
Northern Metropolitan	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Outer Eastern		x	x	x	x		x
Prahran	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

Source: OTFE

Table 1-2: Targets set and places achieved for NTP clients by designated groups, Box Hill, 1988, 1989

Year	Women	ATSI	NESB	DISAB	INST	LTU	SSP	TOTAL	
1988									
Targets set	458	22	342	52	5	52	52	983	Total enrolments in 1988—17 800
Achieved	408	12	202	58	1	54	98	843	
1989									
Targets set	447	30	527	75	2	59	127	1314	Total enrolments in 1989—16 155
Achieved	442	14	608	70	1	66	106	1414	

WOMEN = Women and girls
ATSI = Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders
NESB = Non-English-speaking background
DISAB = People with physical, sensory, or intellectual disabilities
INST = People who are institutionalised, or confined (including until 1992)
LTU = Long-term unemployed
SSP = Sole-supporting parents
ISOL = People from isolated rural areas (in 1990–1994)

Source: Box Hill Pilot Report

- This table indicates an increase in enrolments in 1989 as compared to 1988 for all NTP client groups with the exception of institutionalised (INST) which remained the same. This was the only NTP group for which accurate monitoring procedures were not in place. NESB and Long-term unemployed (LTU) enrolments exceeded targets set by 81 and 7 respectively. Targets achieved for all other groups were close to being achieved with the exception of Aborigines (ABS).

- A total of 1414 NTP clients were enrolled in college courses. This represented an increase of 571 enrolments on 1988 NTP enrolments. In addition, 1989 targets achieved exceeded targets set by 100 as compared to 1988 targets achieved which were 140 fewer than those set. The overall proportion of NTP clients in total enrolments also increased in 1989.

Table 1-3: Training priorities for client groups, Victoria

	Access	Pathways	Support services	Language and literacy	Workplace	Flexible delivery
Koories	Improved access and participation through a range of agreed initiatives development of a greater range of modules at entry level	Development of Joint Operational Plan with ACFEB. Improved integration of labour markets projects with course planning	Maintenance of extensive college based support services	Development of strategies to fully integrate literacy provision with vocational training	Identify opportunities for workplace delivery/joint venture VAEAI and other relevant ITBs to include ATSIC sponsored commercial enterprises	Improved program delivery from rurally isolated campus Echuca, Swan Hill, Robinvale Gippsland (far east region)
Women	Further development of system and provider level indicators of women's access and participation in vocational education and training. Incorporation of gender equity guidelines into Victorian Industry Training Board Plans and agreements	Promotion of credit transfer from and accreditation of vocational education courses in which women predominate	Promote the redesign of support services in training delivery to better support women and girls	Extension of literacy skills to women with little formal education and/or long periods out of the workforce, to enable both access to vocational education and training e.g. NESB women, older women, trialling of AVCTS pilot for NESB women	Identification of barriers to women in obtaining recognition of skills and workplace training. Development of best practice models regarding women's access to training in targeted industries for women and growth industries	Development of best practice in flexible learning for women to ensure their learning styles and personal circumstances are catered for
Disabilities	Increase participation of people with disabilities in accredited vocational education and training	Promote pathways in education and training to maximise vocational outcomes. Participate in trailing of AVCTS	Identify level of support required by people with disabilities to access vocational education and training and resource this support appropriately. Support co-ordination of services by Government agencies	Expand provision of vocational literacy where demand is identified	Increase opportunities for vocational training in the workplace such as in the AVCTS feasibility study in the Certificate in Work Education	Develop models of best practice in flexible delivery to meet diverse needs of students with disabilities

Source: State Training Board, *The training profile for Victoria, 1994*

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Table 1-3: Training priorities for client groups, Victoria (cont)

	Access	Pathways	Support Services	Language and literacy	Workplace	Flexible delivery
People from non-English-speaking backgrounds or English-speaking with low literacy levels	Increase the number of people from group in workplace base operative level training and career enhancement. Ensure language, literacy and numeracy addressed in design and writing of core and base level modules	Promote RPL. Maximise cross accreditation and articulate options. Integration of language and literacy into courses structures and delivery	Promote courses to people from NESB. Enhance vocational counselling	Review accreditation courses to identify gaps and rationalise number of courses	Encourage delivery in the workplace particularly using the integrated model	Investigate different modes of delivery
Long-term unemployed	Increase access and participation of long-term unemployed to training in areas of potential employment growth especially self employment	Enhanced links between labour market programs and accredited vocational education and training programs	Increased access to ongoing vocational counselling during and post courses	Integrated language and literacy training where appropriate	On and off the job training as a way in to paid employment	Promote self-access, self-paced and other flexible learning modes for isolated groups and individuals
Rurally isolated	Improve participation of non-metropolitan people in vocational education and training	Extend arrangements by non-metropolitan colleges to offer core units in local settings	Maintain range of services to enhance completion rates	Identify requirements for workplace and entry level students	Identify/respond to training requirements in non-metropolitan Victoria	Use innovative delivery/technology to introduce participation of rurally isolated students

Source: State Training Board, *The training profile for Victoria, 1994*

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Table 1-3: Training priorities for client groups, Victoria (cont)

	Access	Pathways	Support Services	Language and literacy	Workplace	Flexible delivery
People in Corrections	Increase access to entry-level training for prisoners. Increase delivery of training to community based offenders	Define and implement industry training pathways in a number of industries including Hospitality, Engineering, Business Services. Establish pathways linking basic education with vocational and industry certificates	Increase opportunities for vocational counselling especially for prisoners and those on community based corrections with special needs e.g. women, Koories, people with intellectual disabilities	Contextualize teaching of language and literacy through integration with vocational studies	Design training around the work undertaken for the prison industries	Maintain and promote where appropriate flexible delivery; extend hour operations (e.g. weekends)
Juvenile Justice	Ensure full range of educational provision from basic education to the Victorian Certificate of Education is available to young people in juvenile justice. Increase access to entry-level training	Provide courses with clearly identified pathways to further education and training	Provide professional development to teachers especially in teaching of literacy. Initiate preventive strategies e.g. support for Salvation Army project with homeless youth, Crossroads	Integrate as far as possible, language and literacy components of general education provision with vocational studies	Link work release to vocational education and training programs	Increase flexibility of course delivery, particularly through electronic modes

Source: State Training Board, *The training profile for Victoria, 1994*

Table 1-4: Breakdown of NTS targets set by Victorian TAFE colleges, 1990

COLLEGE	WOMEN	ATSI	DISAB	SSP	LTU	NESB	ISOL	INST
BROADMEADOWS	56	0	4	6	13	14	0	
BOX HILL	411	26	65	69	48	422	0	
DANDENONG	28	0	12	0	0	15	5	
EAST GIPPSLAND	20	36	10	25	44	9	100	
FLAGSTAFF	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	
FOOTSCRAY	27	0	12	0	0	15	0	
FRANKSTON	238	0	54	63	55	52	35	
GORDON	61	4	18	25	10	42	0	
GOULBURN	662	19	9	10	30	4	900	
HOLMESGLEN	429	5	96	91	144	378	233	
LODDON C	28	5	4	10	17	1	16	
MELB C/DEC	90	0	3	0	0	3	0	
MOORABBIN	219	0	19	11	28	192	0	
MELB C/TEX	13	0	0	0	0	2	0	
NEWPORT	8	0	0	0	0	15	0	
N/METRO	230	0	24	24	36	81	20	
OUTER/E	89	0	25	25	17	15	2	
PRAHRAN	329	10	19	19	15	238	62	
RMIT	78	0	0	0	0	0	0	
SMB	86	0	0	0	20	0	0	
SUNRAYSIA	21	3	19	19	21	18	62	
SWINBURNE	20	0	3	3	10	18	0	
WANGARATTA	53	2	3	3	15	1	29	
WESTERN	236	0	0	0	0	196	0	
WILLIAM A	105	7	0	0	58	53	0	
WIMMERA	6	0	3	3	1	0	26	
WODONGA	10	0	4	4	8	7	0	
YALLOURN	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	
NTS TARGETS	3553	123	406	410	590	1791	1490	87

Source: OTFE

Table 1-5: Breakdown of NTS places achieved by Victorian colleges, 1990

COLLEGE	WOMEN	ATSI	DISAB	SSP	LTU	NESB	ISOL	INST
BMEADOWS	42	0	5	5	12	14	0	0
BOX HILL	439	15	63	67	39	428	14	1
DANDENONG	19	0	12	0	0	20	15	0
EAST GIPPS	21	21	9	22	39	5	212	1
FLAGSTAFF	0	0	1	0	0	30	0	31
FOOTSCRAY	39	0	10	0	0	23	0	0
FRANKSTON	309	3	47	62	37	56	31	8
GORDON	7	3	11	23	8	6	0	0
GOULBURN	662	19	9	10	30	4	895	6
HOLMESGLEN	1117	3	70	127	210	903	0	0
LODDON C	65	1	6	2	14	0	11	0
MELB C/DEC	73	5	2	0	0	24	0	0
MOORABBIN	186	0	95	44	36	276	0	0
MELB C/TEX	19	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
NEWPORT	5	0	1	7	0	19	0	0
N/METRO	261	1	14	12	23	71	0	0
OUTER/E	89	0	18	25	17	15	2	0
PRAHRAN	1418	10	0	23	21	343	70	0
RMIT	38	0	4	0	0	0	0	0
SMB	190	0	13	1	31	0	7	0
SUNRAYSIA	21	2	3	14	46	18	36	0
SWINBURNE	24	0	6	2	6	17	0	0
WANGARATTA	40	2	11	3	15	1	32	13
WESTERN	149	0	0	0	0	145	0	0
WILLIAM A	41	2	4	9	48	44	0	3
WIMMERA	7	0	0	3	1	0	26	0
WODONGA	9	0	10	1	6	5	0	0
YALLOURN	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
NTS PLACES	5290	88	425	462	639	2468	1351	63

Source: OTFE

Table 1-6: Breakdown of NTS targets set by Victorian colleges, 1991

COLLEGE	TSP	WOMEN	ATSI	DISAB	SSP	LTU	NESB	ISOL	INST	TTS
BROADMDWS	789	38	0	10	7	75	114	0	10	254
BOX HILL	3040	312	18	73	70	96	354	47	2	972
DANDENONG	360	26	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	31
EAST GIPPS	408	5	17	10	34	70	3	61	0	200
FLAGSTAFF	74	0	2	0	1	0	15	0	0	18
FOOTSCRAY	1872	106	2	15	18	20	159	0	0	320
FRANKSTON	1194	46	2	54	84	80	58	42	0	366
GORDON	880	35	12	19	28	24	32	5	0	155
GOULBURN	905	30	8	3	14	10	5	7	0	77
HOLMESGLEN	7316	1540	12	88	185	572	940	0	0	3437
LODDON C	719	100	4	8	26	42	6	39	0	225
MELB C/DEC	569	77	4	1	0	0	0	0	0	82
MOORABBIN	1878	80	0	25	0	0	386	0	0	491
MELB C/TEX	612	144	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	144
NEWPORT	112	12	0	4	3	4	2	0	0	25
N/METRO	1314	108	0	58	11	60	89	0	0	324
OUTER/E	850	64	12	31	16	30	75	0	4	232
PRAHRAN	1791	259	1	12	18	48	245	3	0	586
RMIT	658	121	0	11	8	42	28	0	2	210
SMB	746	73	0	0	12	21	0	29	0	135
SOUTH WEST	451	8	17	24	51	35	0	3	2	140
SUNRAYSIA	63	10	2	0	0	0	7	0	0	18
SWINBURNE	1402	3	0	3	2	10	8	0	0	25
WANGARATTA	119	10	0	8	10	14	0	0	0	42
WESTERN	623	86	0	17	11	11	150	0	0	275
WILLIAM ANG	541	47	2	17	17	13	39	0	0	135
WIMMERA	171	18	4	3	4	3	0	10	0	42
WODONGA	279	8	0	15	15	19	2	0	0	59
YALLOURN	1426	30	4	8	28	23	3	17	12	126
NTS TARGETS	31162	3396	123	516	672	1422	2724	263	32	9148

Source: OTFE

TSP = Total Student Places
TTS = Total Target Students

Table 1-7: Breakdown of NTS places achieved in Victorian colleges, 1991

COLLEGE	TSP	WOMEN	ATSI	DISAB	SSP	LTU	NESB	ISOL	INST	TTS
BMEADOWS	789	48	0	4	5	61	83	0	10	211
BOX HILL	3040	312	18	73	70	96	354	47	2	972
DANDENONG	360	26	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	30
EAST GIPPS	408	6	10	5	25	84	0	38	0	168
FLAGSTAFF	74	0	2	0	1	0	15	0	0	18
FOOTSCRAY	1823	133	2	17	21	22	211	0	0	406
FRANKSTON	1194	58	0	29	71	124	54	44	0	380
GORDON	1196	12	1	11	30	43	14	2	0	113
GOULBURN	905	30	8	3	14	10	5	7	0	77
HOLMESGLEN	8391	2032	13	145	240	1033	1630	0	0	5094
LODDON C	719	100	4	8	26	42	6	39	0	225
MELB C/DEC	569	63	3	2	1	3	0	0	0	72
MOORABBIN	1878	180	0	45	0	0	0	0	0	225
MELB C/TEX	612	144	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	144
NEWPORT	18	4	0	0	3	6	5	0	0	18
N/METRO	1314	86	0	19	12	44	57	0	0	218
OUTER/E	850	134	9	45	16	34	104	0	2	345
PRAHRAN	2485	272	1	18	6	188	360	0	0	846
RMIT	614	113	0	8	3	22	45	0	0	191
SMB	601	92	1	12	35	59	21	108	3	332
SOUTH WEST	453	12	1	29	53	35	6	3	2	141
SUNRAYSIA	83	10	2	0	0	0	7	0	0	19
SWINBURNE	378	0	0	6	1	0	8	2	0	17
WANGARATTA	120	13	0	8	10	14	0	0	0	45
WESTERN	623	96	0	16	0	2	156	0	0	270
WILLIAM A	290	17	1	6	5	25	19	0	0	73
WIMMERA	171	18	4	3	4	3	0	10	0	42
WODONGA	279	8	2	18	21	53	2	0	0	105
YALLOURN	1426	30	4	9	28	23	3	17	12	126
NTS ACHIEVED	31643	4049	86	543	701	2026	3169	318	31	10823

Source: OTFE

TSP = Total Student Places
TTS = Total Target Students

Table 1-8: Breakdown of NTS targets set by Victorian colleges, 1992

TARGETS SET								
COLLEGE	WOMEN	ATSI	DISAB	SSP	LTU	NESB	ISOL	TOTAL
BATMAN	0	1	0	1	65	2	0	69
BOX HILL	835	13	82	70	209	730	40	1979
BROADMEADOWS	59	0	8	11	27	29	0	134
CENTRAL GIPPS	143	43	21	60	241	43	213	764
DANDENONG	65	36	20	0	30	155	1000	1306
EAST GIPPS	31	39	12	31	106	3	92	314
FLAGSTAFF	0	3	34	48	12	80	0	177
FRANKSTON	112	3	69	108	154	83	47	556
GORDON TECH	30	7	17	28	36	25	4	147
GOULB VALLEY	36	7	4	2	5	4	0	58
HOLMESGLEN	3450	11	82	368	2519	6842	0	13272
LODDON CAMPASPE	0	19	10	39	216	2	208	494
M C PRINTING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M C TEXTILES	227	4	7	9	13	80	3	343
MOORABBIN	107	9	62	63	340	764	0	1335
NORTHERN MET	234	0	64	39	151	147	0	835
OUTER EASTERN	124	2	50	75	90	83	18	442
RICHMOND	2	0	3	0	3	65	0	73
R M I T	101	24	31	68	122	158	0	504
SM BALLARAT	219	11	22	48	118	20	361	797
SOUTH WEST	35	10	48	71	71	0	0	235
SUNRAYSIA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWINBURNE	30	0	8	19	70	40	0	187
VCAH	354	8	20	25	64	52	692	1215
VUT WEST INSTIT	129	0	12	16	33	171	0	361
WANGARATTA	10	0	0	5	32	0	0	47
WESTERN MET	57	0	28	147	180	321	0	733
W ANGLISS	76	3	20	20	60	47	0	226
WIMMERA	53	10	4	4	22	0	21	114
WODONGA	28	1	8	24	78	9	0	146
NTS SET	6545	264	736	1399	5065	9935	2699	26643

Source: OTFE

Table 1-9: Breakdown of NTS targets achieved by Victorian colleges, 1992

TARGETS ACHIEVED								
COLLEGE	**WOMEN**	**ATSI**	**DISAB**	**SSP**	**LTU**	**NESB**	**ISOL**	**TOTAL**
BATMAN	157	0	0	0	874	86	0	1117
BOX HILL	840	5	125	180	245	815	35	2245
BROADMEADOWS	109	0	8	50	242	332	0	741
CENTRAL GIPPS	129	12	6	52	167	46	1228	1640
DANDENONG	72	63	70	0	1151	848	1060	3264
EAST GIPPS	27	52	27	32	107	3	106	354
FLAGSTAFF	0	4	54	36	12	78	0	184
FRANKSTON	175	10	82	189	345	179	0	980
GORDON TECH	30	3	15	26	124	23	5	226
GOULB VALLEY	38	8	17	30	193	47	0	333
HOLMESGLEN	3450	11	82	368	2519	6842	0	13272
LODDON CAMPASPE	0	41	26	160	713	11	0	951
M C PRINTING	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
M C TEXTILES	182	0	0	14	35	91	0	322
MOORABBIN	97	10	112	265	1171	902	0	2557
NORTHERN MET	244	0	29	46	387	138	0	844
OUTER EASTERN	405	18	110	426	1704	828	345	3834
RICHMOND	9	0	2	0	41	107	0	159
R M I T	153	4	19	5	59	136	0	374
SM BALLARAT	232	15	40	97	231	18	636	1269
SOUTH WEST	613	11	24	92	229	12	0	981
SUNRAYSIA	987	47	52	33	98	100	1669	2984
SWINBURNE	26	0	7	15	70	40	0	158
VCAH	607	11	65	87	830	96	1045	2741
VUT WEST INSTIT	239	11	22	60	382	237	0	951
WANGARATTA	17	0	0	5	41	0	0	63
WESTERN MET	50	0	25	145	186	425	0	831
W ANGLISS	56	0	8	6	88	14	0	172
WIMMERA	147	41	10	10	96	0	271	575
WODONGA	48	3	15	38	110	15	0	229
NTS ACHIEVED	9139	380	1052	2467	12450	12469	6400	44035

Source: OTFE

Table 1-10: Breakdown of NTS targets set by Victorian colleges, 1996

COLLEGE	WOMEN	ATSI	DISAB	SSP	LTU	NESB	ISOL	TOTAL
BATMAN	80	5	-	-	250	38	2	375
BOX HILL	850	14	110	180	235	750	45	2184
BROADMEADOWS	120	30	20	45	200	320	-	735
CENTRAL GIPPS	256	27	13	105	244	85	2367	3097
DANDENONG	75	60	55	100	1200	1000	-	2490
EAST GIPPS	40	45	20	35	120	4	100	364
FLAGSTAFF	-	6	30	30	17	60	3	146
FRANKSTON	216	10	97	179	298	35	20	855+
GORDON TECH	45	6	17	15	51	30	12	176
GOULB VALLEY	40	8	16	30	40	10	30	174
HOLMESGLEN	2000	10	38	175	1300	1350	-	4873
LODDON CAMPASPE	195	38	10	35	230	10	123	641
*M C DECORATION	(38)	-	(13)	(5)	(20)	(7)	-	(83)
M C PRINTING	30	1	1	1	3	1	5	42
M C TEXTILES	225	2	5	15	30	80	-	357
MOORABBIN	2000	6	45	107	696	1700	3	4557
NORTHERN MET	150	-	40	50	307	118	-	665
OUTER EASTERN	220	20	95	145	350	250	160	1240
RICHMOND	62	-	-	2	6	2	-	72
*R M I T	110	30	33	70	140	162	-	545
SMI BALLARAT	240	25	25	90	200	20	500	1150
SOUTH WEST	51	10	44	88	125	14	-	332
SUNRAYSIA	20	28	7	-	-	20	131	206
SWINBURNE UNI	20	10	35	35	40	30	-	170
(RMIT)								
VCAH	422	14	35	39	91	107	861	1569
VUT WEST INSTIT	140	2	18	37	50	180	-	427
WANGARATTA	4	-	8	10	10	-	40	72
WESTERN MET	65	-	35	170	220	365	-	855
WM ANGLISS	-	2	21	21	125	58	-	227
WIMMERA	62	6	4	7	42	-	51	172
WODONGA	55	7	20	45	120	25	-	272
NTS TARGETS	7793	422	897	1861	6740	6824	4503	29040

Source: OTFE

COLLEGE	WOMEN	ATSI	DISAB	SSP	LTU	NESB	ISOL	TOTAL
BATMAN	162	2	9	5	371	272	1	822
BOX HILL	868	4	120	212	255	771	40	2270
BROADMEADOWS	101	37	23	45	107	135	0	448
CENTRAL GIPPS	133	20	21	136	773	103	1672	2858
DANDENONG	116	69	106	309	2088	3276	0	5964
EAST GIPPS	35	97	27	30	115	4	124	432
FRANKSTON	255	17	251	365	973	290	23	2174
GORDON TECH	46	3	18	25	51	30	12	185
GOULB VALLEY	40	2	5	18	62	10	13	150
HOLMESGLEN	1286	13	269	447	2800	5222	0	10037
LODDON CAMPASPE	245	48	41	250	790	7	1709	3090
MC PRINTING	137	0	3	2	0	5	5	152
MC TEXTILES	597	0	3	125	0	412	0	1137
MOORABBIN	2636	17	140	208	1540	1262	0	5803
NORTHERN MET	207	0	18	46	433	118	0	822
OUTER EASTERN	341	15	112	384	1291	673	250	3066
RICHMOND	62	0	0	2	6	2	0	72
RMIT	702	1	30	20	181	376	0	1310
SM BALLARAT	269	27	58	181	278	22	926	1761
SOUTH WEST	34	45	100	296	831	43	0	1349
SUNRAYSIA	40	33	13	0	0	12	185	283
SWINBURNE	34	14	38	38	0	0	6	130
VCAH	1320	29	51	47	303	35	965	2750
VUT WEST INSTIT	194	8	22	45	254	291	18	832
WANGARATTA	4	0	8	20	10	40	82	164
WESTERN MET	65	0	35	170	220	365	0	855
WM ANGLISS	0	1	10	9	188	25	0	233
WIMMERA	1619	61	65	134	496	0	825	3200
WODONGA	82	7	35	63	181	33	0	401
NTS ACHIEVED	8343	258	741	1790	6212	3714	3262	24320

Source: OTFE

Table 1-12: Breakdown of NTS targets set by Victorian colleges. 1994

COLLEGE	WOMEN	ATSI	DISAB	SSP	LTU	NESB	ISOL	TOTAL
BATMAN	276	17	11	74	463	428	5	1274
BOX HILL	860	8	120	210	240	750	45	2233
BROADMEADOWS	120	50	50	45	200	250	-	715
CENTRAL GIPPS	267	13	15	83	450	91	630	1549
DANDENONG	90	60	70	150	1400	1500	400	3670
EAST GIPPS	35	25	30	30	100	4	120	344
FLAGSTAFF	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
FRANKSTON	250	15	150	250	350	100	50	1165
GORDON TECH	74	9	21	27	67	40	7	245
GOULB VALLEY	76	9	9	24	40	18	6	182
HOLMESGLEN	2200	8	44	195	1500	2000	-	5947
LODDON CAMPASPE	47	40	32	46	346	12	96	619
M C DECORATION								
M C PRINTING	35	2	1	1	5	5	5	54
M C TEXTILES	225	5	5	20	30	90	2	377
MOORABBIN	2200	10	75	120	800	1500	5	4710
NORTHERN MET	200	-	20	50	400	130	-	800
OUTER EASTERN	260	20	150	350	-	450	250	1480
RICHMOND	50	-	5	5	50	50	20	180
R M I T	220	6	17	7	142	20	-	412
SMI BALLARAT	250	20	50	100	200	20	650	1290
SOUTH WEST	55	20	64	100	160	20	60	479
SUNRAYSIA	40	35	10	40	390	15	150	680
SWINBURNE UNI	20	10	35	35	40	30	-	170
(RMIT)								
VCAH	436	40	36	39	102	79	1000	1732
VUT WEST INSTIT	106	10	32	41	62	182	9	442
WANGARATTA	4	10	21	15	-	-	30	80
WESTERN MET	110	3	90	240	270	470	-	1183
WM ANGLISS	-	2	19	27	239	32	-	319
WIMMERA	180	25	45	50	150	-	250	700
WODONGA	65	15	30	50	140	30	120	450
TOTAL	8751	487	1257	2424	8336	8316	3910	33481

Source: OTFE

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